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WOMEN HELPERS

IN

THE CHURCH.

WOMEN HELPERS

IN

THE CHURCH,

THEIR SAYINGS AND DOINGS.

EDITED BY WILLIAM WELSH.

PHILADELPHIA:
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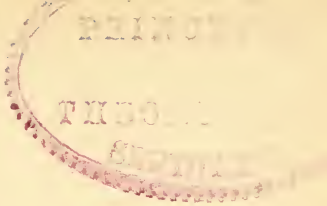

INTRODUCTION.

The following interesting and instructive narratives of woman's agency in winning souls and grafting them into the Church, were written at the urgent solicitation of an associate worker. He saw what God had wrought through the agency of zealous women providentially placed in ripe fields; he therefore desired to obtain from them a detailed statement of the way in which these successes had been wrought, to encourage still more timid women to use their experience and heart-power in aid of the Christian ministry.

Permission was with difficulty obtained from all of the writers to submit their narratives to Bishop Alonzo Potter for use at his discretion. He deemed their publication very important, and was in the act of preparing them for the press when feeble health induced him to undertake a sea-voyage, from which he never returned. These papers, with introductory articles written by the undersigned over the letter H, were, after the lamented death of Bishop Potter, published in the Spirit of Missions.

The quickening influence of these details of the sayings

and doings of successful workers, was so apparent throughout the Church, that several Bishops and other ministers asked again and again for their republication in a more compact and permanent form. Now that the Church has imparted scriptural dignity to the spiritual work of women helpers, and that missionaries and parish ministers are earnestly seeking for such helpers, there is an evident ripeness for the republication of these papers, and an article on parochial aggressive work. W. W.

PHILADELPHIA, 1872.

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WOMEN HELPERS

IN

THE CHURCH.

RIPE FIELDS.

Tidings from a foreign field of its ripeness for the gospel present to the human heart the strongest and most successful appeal for Christian teachers; and surely this principle is equally applicable to the field immediately around our homes and churches. When the first disciples of our Lord and Saviour marveled that He did not restrict his teachings to the members of God's organized family, He said, "Lift up your eyes and look on the fields, for they are white already to harvest." As the glad tidings of salvation have been proclaimed for more than eighteen hundred years, surely the human heart is now, in this Christian land, still more ready than at first to be garnered into the Church. No person, however desponding or skeptical, is willing to admit that the pulpit, the press, and the Sunday-school have utterly failed in their great mission to the men and women of the working classes and to the poor, although such are sadly neglected by the Christian Church. The few who labor in this field affirm that thousands of immortal beings, ripe for religious instruction, are festering and perishing around our churches because no one actively cares for their souls.

These outcasts from the Church still manifest a ripeness for religious instruction when it is adapted to their capacities and requirements; they usually receive courteously intelligent, sympathizing Christian visitors, and evince a willingness to join a Bible-class, a mothers' meeting, or other Christian associations that are congenial to their tastes.

One association of ladies, charged with the supervision of a very large "mothers' meeting," paid over six thousand visits last year, and, from the monthly reports of these visitors, it is evident that both men and women of all nationalities can be readily won to Christ, and brought to appropriate services in his Church by prayerful, sympathizing, and intelligent effort.

When the most obdurate of such persons are brought to church hospitals with ailments so slight as to give no apprehension of death, Christian teachers are surprised at their readiness to receive religious instruction, either separately or in daily Bible-classes; and these teachers are often deeply pained to hear the sin-stricken soul cry out, "No one ever before spoke to me about my soul!" This ripeness for religious teaching was apparent in our military hospitals, for men slightly wounded, when approached tenderly, intelligently, and prayerfully, were readily induced to attend two daily Bible-classes; and God's blessing was largely poured on these efforts for the salvation of the soldier.

Bishop Alonzo Potter thus recorded his testimony as to the ripeness of the great field that surrounds every church, whether in city, village, or country: "I have seen godless men and reckless youth, who had withstood all others, yielding to the silent and persevering efforts of ladies; and demonstrating how much can be done among the most forlorn of our people through this agency. It is teaching us more and more the necessity of individualizing our

appeals, of making them with all kindness and constancy, and of coupling them with fervent and believing prayer."

The Lord Bishop of Rochester, speaking of recent successful efforts to Christianize the most stolid and brutish of the English farm laborers,—"those hitherto unapproachable beings,"—says, "It may seem to some like a grand discovery that we can now tell, without fear of contradiction, how the dullest of our most rough and uncouth neighbors may be brought to sit as teachable, intelligent children at our feet. But a few years ago the thing was accounted an impossibility." He adds, "The love of Christ, acting on our own hearts and those of others in the spirit of gentleness and peace, has accomplished and will effect, wherever it is brought to bear in simplicity, more than is here detailed."

"The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that He would send forth more laborers into his harvest." Reader, in offering this prayer, do not hold back from any personal service to which you may be called: remember, if you have freely received, you are bound freely to give example, influence, and instruction to all who are less favored than yourself. Education, social position, and money are all trusts involving a fearful personal responsibility from which an already overtasked minister cannot relieve you, and that you have no scriptural warrant for delegating to another.

W.

TEACHERS AND EXEMPLARS OF CHRISTIANITY.

WHO are to be the teachers and exemplars of Christianity in the family and in the Church, the only institutions divinely appointed to promote the moral and spiritual renovation of fallen man?

This is a question of fearful moment; for, even in our highly-favored land, so radiant with gospel light, the great mass of our people seem to be going down "the broad way that leadeth to destruction." Is the father or the minister to be the teacher and exemplar of Christianity in such a sense as to lessen the responsibility of others, or are all Christians in their several spheres equally bound to "shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life?"

In the family, the father is held responsible by Holy Writ for the moral and religious training and instruction of his children, yet most of "the nurture and admonition of the Lord" is of necessity given by the mother, who is often aided by the older children. In a well-ordered Christian household the father does not, through fear of losing authority, restrain the mother and the older children from being teachers as well as exemplars of Christianity; he incites them to it, giving them the advantage of his calmer judgment and his experience in the world. He takes advantage of the genial hearts of the household to make religion attractive, thus picturing to the youthful mind and heart the joys which God has in store for all who love and serve Him.

In the Jewish Church the priests and Levites were commissioned to preserve and proclaim God's law, and to point to a coming Saviour through prescribed rites and ceremonies; but the chief part of the moral and religious training devolved upon the members of the household.

When the Lord Jesus in person organized and established the Christian Church, He plainly indicated that the sacraments were to be administered by ministers of his appointment, who were also to preach with special authority; yet it is evident from the parables of our Lord and his other teachings, that all who should freely receive his grace were equally bound in their respective spheres to manifest that grace both in word and deed. The Epistles also testify to the great use that the first preachers made of all classes of helpers, in extending the blessings of the gospel where *their* voices could not reach; and also of the absolute need of the mature private Christian, not only to exemplify Christianity, but also to teach and to watch over persons recently converted from skepticism or immorality.

The Church has for a long season greatly erred by encouraging the laity, especially men of high social position, in their natural desire to be "hearers only;" therefore, lay persons often consider it a favor to their minister, instead of an obvious duty and a privilege, to aid him in the spiritual, as well as in the temporal work of the parish.

When the laity are not taught and trained to be exemplars of Christianity, it sometimes occurs that they grow cold at heart and lose their interest in the Church, obliging the minister to leave his high vocation and collect money from door to door to repair the church or to free it from debt. When the laity have been trained to perform the *spiritual work* indicated by our Lord in his gospel, their hearts are often refreshed and their minds so liberalized that they zealously undertake the self-denying work of collecting money, rather than allow their minister to leave his spiritual calling.

Before the Church can make any great inroad upon the world, her intelligent and influential laity must be taught and made to feel, that in proportion to their individual interest in that salvation wrought out for them by a cruci-

fied Redeemer, is their obligation to become exemplars and teachers of Christianity to persons less favored than themselves.

On this subject, Bishop Horatio Potter and other members of a committee thus spoke: "Even secular plans and undertakings may furnish the Church with some hints, for we read that 'the children of this world are, in their generation, wiser than the children of light.' The politician never rests; he searches out every voter, he brings before him whatever may seem best fitted to move him to his purpose; he provides conveyances for the aged and infirm, he supplies him with the ballot, and never leaves him till he sees him drop it where it is beyond all further contingencies. So the vendor of intoxicating drinks does not depend merely on the appetite of those who pass his door, or the good quality of his liquors, or the beauty of his saloon, to secure custom: he employs those who will be boon companions, and add the pleasures of society to the exhilaration of the cup. Often, too, he has emissaries, who go abroad to lure the unwary: if happy, by the promise of increased delights; if unhappy, by the prospect of oblivion to their sorrows. Is it strange that the working man should contrast such unresting zeal, such indomitable perseverance, such fertile ingenuity, such genial fellowship, in 'the children of the world,' with the coldness, and the halting, hesitating efforts of those who profess to work for the eternal redemption of their own souls and the souls around them?"

When the Church adopts the suggestion of her Lord, and trains all her members in the *exercise* of their vocation and ministry, then and not till then will the missionary treasury overflow, or teachers and preachers, trained and tested in the school of practice, go forth to cultivate still more difficult fields. W.

THE CHURCH A TRAINING-SCHOOL.

THE training-schools of the world, the flesh, and the devil are all in active and successful operation, sending forth hosts of graduates, apt to teach through constant practice and close observation of the ever-varying phases of human nature.

The world thoroughly trains its leaders of fashion in the science of human nature and in the use of the pictorial and the popular, enabling them to cater to the taste of every individual so perfectly that even Christians both young and old are often enslaved by its blandishments. The flesh schools its graduates in every art and device that can excite or gratify man's varied lusts; expending more scientific skill and more money even in manufacturing superfluous drinks, and more eloquence and more heart in discussing their virtues and in exciting to their use, than are expended by Christians in their great mission to a fallen world. The devil selects mediums who are both profound and popular in inciting to so-called spiritualism and skepticism, and also trains adepts in every department, ranging down to the lowest vices. What closeness of observation, what innocency of manner, what profound skill, what indomitable perseverance were manifested in robbing the Concord Bank! Christians may well be ashamed of their lack of faith and perseverance when they learn that these thieves spent fifteen days in opening the outer door, and eighty days and nights in getting wax impressions and in forging keys for the seven inner locks.

That the children of this world continue to be wiser than the children of light is still further illustrated by the present mode of detecting counterfeiters and burglars, and of recovering stolen treasure artfully concealed. Training-schools for so-called detectives have been established in all

large communities; quick-witted, observant men, with ready sympathies, are selected, and so thoroughly trained in the school of practice under competent masters that they acquire an almost miraculous power of detecting evil-doers, and bringing them to confession. These experts are thoroughly organized under the sanction of law, and they confer together freely, that each one may benefit by the experience of his fellow, and undertake the work for which he has the greatest aptitude.

Thus, whilst the Church is slowly awakening to the vital importance of training her clergy and laity to contend, mind to mind and heart to heart, with the individual man, her triple enemy has hosts of graduates in the field, thoroughly trained in the principles and practice of their soul-destroying arts. When the Son of God dwelt upon earth, He selected working men and trained them up for three years in the school of practice, under his own personal instruction, until they acquired skill to do man's share in the great work of unlocking the human mind and heart. If this practical training were needful when miraculous gifts were imparted to each Christian teacher, surely it is much more needful now.

A minister of the gospel who is instructed in the doctrines and ritual of the Church, by God's blessing largely benefits persons who are disposed to attend public worship; but without a practical training, he is rarely successful in reaching the great body of our people, who must be sought out individually, and taught from house to house. When the art of dealing singly with careless or reckless sinners is not acquired early in the Christian life, later efforts are usually impaired by a constraint that destroys the naturalness, ease of manner, and ardor so necessary to success. The irrepressible zeal of some ardent Christian people will find vent outside of the Church, unless the minister has skill to direct and control it; or if it is exercised success-

fully in the parish, without the rector's supervision, it may decrease the reverence that is his due. Zealous chaplains were eminently successful, both in hospital and camp, when, like the physician and surgeon, they were skilled in treating each man according to his ascertained condition; but equally godly ministers, without this qualification, usually failed utterly in their great work. The missionary or teacher who has not acquired the art of succ ssfully reaching the individual sinner here, where he is perfectly familiar with the language and where Christianity exerts its strongest influence, may hardly expect much success in heathen lands, where superstition and prejudice abound; and such a minister will rarely be able to grapple successfully with reckless and irreverent people, the usual pioneers in the frontier settlements of our own country. W.

AGGRESSIVE WARFARE.

In carnal warfare, aggressive operations incite to hopeful bravery, although inseparably connected with privations, fatigue, and danger; whilst a long continuance behind defenses in the presence of an active foe, is virtually an admission of weakness, disloyalty, or cowardice, tending invariably to dispirit and demoralize the bravest men.

This is equally true of spiritual warfare; for Christ's soldiers become sadly demoralized in every parish resting complacently in the security of its apostolic order, instead of stirring up its people to an apostolic aggressiveness by which alone the Church can prove her divine commission, and destroy the works of the devil.

Divine authority for a purely defensive system of spiritual warfare ceased when, in the fullness of time, Christianity,

under its great Leader, sallied forth from the defenses of Judaism and organized the system of aggressive warfare, by which all the kingdoms of this world are to become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ.

The defensive and cohesive powers of the Protestant Episcopal Church have been satisfactorily tested both in a monarchy and in a republic, by revolution, rebellions, political strifes, and popular prejudices; but her aggressive powers have not yet been fully developed. Her admirable liturgical system, so influential on the heart and life of persons trained to its use, is not aggressive in its tendency, although it prepares the laity to unite in active measures diligently and safely.

A learned ministry is essential in defending the faith, but profound theologians seldom accommodate their public instruction to all sorts and conditions of men, or acquire skill in dealing with them privately. In times of great ignorance, ardent public preaching moved masses of men through their superstitious fears, and by the forceful freshness of the gospel theme; but that time has passed, by reason of increased intelligence and a mental familiarity with the truths of the gospel. The effect of this change is so apparent that aggressive ministers and teaches find it necessary to deal separately and intelligently with each individual, and to follow up their instruction closely, prayerfully, and perseveringly.

As skill in dealing with the individual mind and heart is now essential to success in aggressive spiritual warfare, and a learned ministry is equally important to the well-being of the Church, this union becomes a necessity.

High mental culture disinclines to practical details, therefore early training is needful to give ease of manner in thus opposing natural tastes; and in the legal and medical professions, where this combination is obviously necessary to success, there is no insurmountable difficulty in forming it.

In carnal warfare this union has also been effected, for the greatest generals are thoroughly practical in dealing with men separately, as well as in directing them collectively; they are also intimately acquainted with the details of every department under their supervision. The most profound lawyers not only argue learnedly before the judge, but they are also trained to read the character of an illiterate jury, in order to appeal to them successfully. What wonderful skill they manifest in eliciting from each witness all that is deemed material to the case, and inducing him to tell it effectively! The learned and eloquent medical professor, if he be a practitioner, accommodates his mind and manners to each patient to secure affection and confidence, and to avail himself of his knowledge in discovering all the symptoms of the disease. He deals patiently with spoiled children and unmannerly or irritable adults, and he bears uncomplainingly much that is in violent opposition to a refined taste, *because it is necessary to success in his profession.*

To prepare for these trials, and to acquire the requisite skill, the medical and surgical student and the young practitioner avail themselves of the most loathsome and dangerous practice in hospitals, almshouses, and dispensaries.

An obvious call of God to the Christian ministry is no guarantee of success or even support, unless this high spiritual calling awakens the vital energies and incites to intelligent and zealous efforts as thoroughly as any secular profession.

The Church seems each year more and more to realize the need of aggressive warfare, both at home and abroad, as is evidenced by increased prayerfulness, by a freer contribution of means, by an earnest desire to reach people hitherto neglected, and by an effort to make both clergy and laity more apt for this work by training them in the school of practice. W.

ORGANIZATION A DIVINE POWER.

The children of this world rightly estimate the omnipotence of human organization, as is evinced by the thoroughness of their political and military rules, discipline, and drill; the power thus concentrated and controlled becoming irresistible when directed against a force in all other respects greatly superior to it. The perfection and power of God's organizations are manifested in the vegetable and animal kingdoms; the tiny fragile cell adapting itself to the infinite requirements of the highly complex structures that grow out of it, and all the discordant shapes and materials harmoniously working together to produce a perfect organism.

In all civilized countries God's hand is universally recognized in the family organization with its relative obligations of husband and wife, parent and child; but fallen man is naturally prone to value this organization more highly than that of the Christian Church, and to spend more time and money in upholding it, because any moral taint in wife or children affects a husband's happiness or standing more directly than their spiritual defection. Even zealous Christians of ardent and impulsive temperaments often practically ignore or lightly esteem a church organization, preferring a sort of independent guerilla warfare to a more orderly and enduring work, under the control of a properly officered and organized body. It is true that God, in the abundance of his mercy, blesses much of this character of work, just as He does the imperfectly organized cryptogamic vegetable, whose office it is to prepare soil for the plant of a more complete organism that has seed within itself. The prolific orchard, when unskillfully tended, often abounds in offshoots from the roots of trees (or suckers, as they are termed from

their exhausting propensities), and when such are separated from the parent stock and transplanted, the same infirmity is sure to be perpetuated by them. As the Christian Church induced the growth of just such offshoots by unduly restraining the growing and fruit-bearing properties of the stock, it behooves her members to deal kindly with other Christian bodies and erratic individuals, and to stimulate her own fruit-bearing properties, that the full power of a completely organized Church may be manifested.

A little while since the evil one, through the agency of the poor African slave, seemed likely to sever this nation into as many fragments as he did the Christian Church; but the Ethiopian stretched out his hand toward God, and now, instead of being the wedge to rive the nation, he, as the freedman, is binding this people and this Church more closely than ever before. When other religious bodies and even human governments are looking hopefully to this Church, surely it is a time for her members to show her true catholicity by cultivating the broadest charity, and exercising it among themselves and towards those that are without. "A great door and effectual is open to" her, "and there are many adversaries." "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong. Let all things be done with charity." W.

PERSONAL MINISTRATION A DIVINE POWER.

Revelation proclaims, and experience attests, that sympathizing love, conveyed by personal Christian instruction and other ministrations, is God's great agent to prepare the natural heart for the work of the Holy Spirit.

The neglect of such an agency is criminal, now that God is making this power the more apparent by the increasingly

large proportion of candidates for confirmation who trace their first religious impressions and their final decision, to the loving personal assiduity of a minister or his helpers. By these personal ministrations only can the Word of God be conveyed, with Divine power, to the dwellers in lanes and alleys, and to the loungers in the highways and hedges, and by sympathizing love alone can such be compelled to come to the marriage supper. In every parish that has intelligently and fully availed itself of the Divine power of prayerful personal ministrations, communicants have increased in number, stability, and missionary zeal, and there is an evident increase in reverence for the Church, her Sacraments, and Ministry. The following touching recital of recent occurrences in the experience of one who has neither wealth, nor health, nor freedom from family cares, beautifully illustrates this. The record was not designed for publication, being simply the monthly report of a lady-visitor to the principal of a mothers' meeting. W.

"I prayed to-day with a wife and mother for her husband and children. For years this woman, through affliction and misery, such as only a wife can feel, has prayed and hoped and waited to see the least evidence of the Spirit's work in her husband's heart, hard and cold by nature—but still harder by being involved in the meshes of intemperance—so stony that the seed, sown with prayer and bitter tears, has failed to take root. But to day she said, 'Oh, I see a little change in Will; I read your letter to him, and he was different from usual; he didn't speak, but sat silently eating his breakfast, so I couldn't help saying something when I saw him so quiet like, and said, Oh, Will, can't you listen to her telling you about Christ? You would be happy and so would I. He used to bluff me off; now he only said, I know—I would go to church on Sunday if I was not going away. (He was about leaving the

town for work.) Oh, I can't tell how full my heart was. Oh, I think there is a change going on. Think how many years we have been married, and I could never get him to go or say anything even in favor of the church, but I see of late he is more gentle and is better about letting me go.' I advised her to say very little, but to pray and watch; also, to avoid going to church if he seemed incommoded by or irritated about it.

"This little evidence of light, dawning into the soul, may not seem much to others, but to her and to me, to us who had so long in midnight darkness waited for the first cheering streak of dawn, like the weary watcher by the sick-bed, it is an earnest of better days to come. It was a precious hour I spent in that house; the three little children knelt with their mother and me to ask God to bless and save that erring and then absent father. Our hearts were indeed full. I went away with the thought, 'The word that for Him thou sowest shall return unto Him again.'

"Truly to-day have I seen 'the blind led by a way which they knew not.' I have scarcely known a woman more ignorant than Betty D., unless it was Betty E., the first woman I ever led to Jesus. She has so improved that now, after four years have passed, it is difficult to realize how very dark her mind and heart were at that time. My present Betty makes me think of the hours I spent with the other; neither can read; both are of the lowest of English working families, and have, from early childhood, lived in the midst of the smoke of the factory and the filth of neglected homes, without any knowledge of thrift or cleanliness. The one, from the side of the dead body of her babe, looked out from her anguish to the God-man, Christ Jesus, and heard the words, 'Come unto me all ye that are weary.' The other is pressed down with sorrow such as few are called upon to bear—her husband suddenly, in the midst of health, being made a cripple for life, and unable to do

anything for his family, so that upon her falls the weight of care he had borne. She must go out from her little children and earn bread for all; her five or six dollars, earned in the factory, must be their only dependence. In her misery she looked for some bright place to relieve the darkness of her dreary path, and He who notes the falling of the sparrow sent the sweet story of the Cross to her, the precious love of Jesus; and when her claim to that love and that Cross was made clear to her, a stream of heavenly light seemed to come in upon her, and in her simple faith she cried out, while tears streamed down her face, 'But, oh, what can I do? He done all that for me; it seems I must do something to let Him know I love Him.' Her husband had the seed sown in his heart while in the hospital, and it needed but culture to spring into life. The earnest attention with which he listens to instruction is most touching. 'Ah, that is good for us to know,' he one day said to me after I had explained to him some portion of Scripture. Another day I read the Fifteenth Chapter of I. Corinthians, and dwelt at length upon the resurrection. This day he was much depressed with the weight of the burden he must carry so long. I admitted how hard and wearisome was the life before him, and then led him to contemplate the glory of the rest for the people of God. With trembling lips he said, 'And it is not long, after all, and then to have that peace.' Another day, when he was suffering much, I told him what the fruits of the Spirit were, one being patience, and remarked, 'Why, D., do you know God is intending you to be educated to teach in his great school?' He laughed and said, 'Nay, not me.' I replied, 'Oh, yes, D., I am one of your scholars, and you have given me my lesson to-day; you have taught me patience. I did not feel patient to-day, and as I sit with you I learn it.' 'Oh, but I would give all the world to walk again and earn my living as I once did;' and, pausing a moment,

he continued, 'all but my faith in Christ.' I said, 'Then nothing would induce you to part with that?' He replied, 'No, no, nothing.' Then did I realize how 'the crooked paths were made straight, the rough ways smooth;' how 'the blind were led by a way they knew not.' And then came to me the beautiful parable, 'The kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed;' for verily the tree of heavenly knowledge had here spread out its branches so that the birds might 'lodge in the branches thereof.' One day he said, 'It is all God's doing; I think that all day.'

"How good it is for our own souls to be doing this work for Christ; the skeleton in our own house looks less ghastly when we see what is behind the curtain in the homes of others. Joined to the church upon earth, I shall hope to meet these children of sorrow in the Church triumphant, where there shall be no more crying; where all tears shall be wiped away.

"I have seen my poor weak Charley to-day. For a brief space he had turned his back upon his enemy, the wine-cup, but to-day we had the old sad story again. He sat reading a tract I had given him. I said, 'Charley, you are sick and will not take medicine; how can you expect otherwise than that your malady will increase? You stay away from God's house, from the only way in which you can hope for help, away from your Saviour.' 'I know it,' he replied, 'and here I sit and do not start, and still I know I ought; I think I will; I intend to do differently.' 'Ah, my friend, do you not know that the way to hell is paved with good intentions? I believe many go down to darkness, passing right by the gate of glory. It will but increase your misery to look back and remember that to-day you felt, as you talked to me, a faint longing after truth and holiness; how exceedingly bitter will be your cry when you remember that, of your own free will, you threw away your birthright in heaven, sold it for a few days of pleasure!'

Seeing him deeply moved, we knelt down. He was touched to tears, yet held back, too weak to grasp the truth, too fast asleep to see the light to come to Christ. I sometimes wish another had this soul to lead. He always urges me to come again, repents and falls, and only because he trusts in self. Week after week I long to see him come to the fountain. Unlike Will, of whom I have spoken, he is a tender-hearted, indulgent father and kind husband, and yet is as far as the other from the fountain which cleanseth from all sin.

"To-day, for the first time for a long while, I found E——l at home. Met his wife outside, who told me she did not know whether to tell me to go in or not, that he had been very disrespectful to our minister, and had forbidden her reading the Bible. With a prayer for guidance, I entered and found him drinking his coffee. He gave me a sharp look, not very encouraging; interpreted, it was very like saying, 'What's your business here?' I called him by name, saying, 'Don't you know me?' 'Oh, yes,' trying very hard to smile, 'sit down.' Knowing what dangerous ground I was on, I felt my way very cautiously; at first said nothing directly for my Master, but asked him about the place of his birth, his parents and home, hoping to find some tender spot where childhood had left its impress, where a mother's voice had lingered to echo again through memory's chamber the words of a forgotten prayer. He told me he lived near W——, went to Sunday-school, all his life, every Sunday; told me how his mother always went, and made them go; how he had left his home and come here, being friendless for many years, his early manhood being spent among men. He grew hard, indifferent, and at last an unbeliever, his heart set against the Church. I asked whether he had ever been in the church here. He replied, 'No, never; I do not like it.' I then said, 'Suppose I were to go into your shop and pronounce judgment upon

your work, that it was poor, in fact good for nothing, when I knew nothing about the principles upon which you worked, nothing about it when finished, good or bad, what would you think of me?' 'Well,' he replied, 'I would think you very foolish.' 'Would you? why, that is just what you are doing about the Church. You say you know nothing about the Church and that you do not like it. Now what shall I think of you, my dear friend?' He laughed a real hearty laugh and said, 'You got me. Well,' he said, 'suppose I come and see it and don't like it, will you let me alone?' 'I couldn't do that, my friend; I might not urge you to go to church just now, but I would tell you what I know about God and his dealings with his creatures, and of Christ's atoning blood; I must do that now as long as we both meet.' He said, 'Well, I will come and see it, but not just now.' So I left him. I since saw his wife. She said he was not at all cross, and had remarked, 'I would rather talk to that woman; she means all she says.' Also, that he was telling the man next door about our talk with great respect and kindness. So it was not forgotten, even if unheeded. May God bless and soften that cold rebellious heart. To know that he remembered, gives me some hope.

"I wish I could say something more pleasant about my old friends, the ——. I have been comparing them now with four years ago when I spent some time every week, teaching and building them up in the faith. It is hard to think how often they have fallen back. I found H—— sober this week. I believe this man's difficulty is his self-righteousness; he imagines himself much better than his fallen brother, because he is honest enough to tell always when he goes wrong. He was very drunk again on Sunday after my talk with him. They all are more careless; his wife, I think, mourns and promises herself and God that she will be earnest and prayerful, but her hot temper often makes all the house suffer. Old grandmother calls me still

her mother,—none like me, loves to see me and have me pray with her, and then quarrels with all about her as soon as I am gone, not because she is insincere, but it is her failing. Oh, the wonderful blood that shall make these poor, weak, and unprofitable servants heirs of the kingdom —praying to-day, to-morrow scolding and reviling; this is the household history from year to year.

"Amanda B. came to ask me back to their house, saying that her husband was home, and he wanted me. I went in, saying 'Indeed, I cannot spare a moment, and as you have joined the men's Bible-class I do not feel so much care of you.' 'That must not make any difference,' he replied. 'I want to hear you talk to me again before I am a member of the church.' He said it was so hard for him to forgive an injury, he thought about it in connection with a recent awful murder, and felt just that wicked spirit when any one harmed him. Poor fellow! how my heart melted to hear him speak of these things in so childlike a manner. When I thought of his dark and wretched home, his cruel father, drunken mother, no God, no Saviour, no light known to him from the cradle up to manhood, and now saw him like a child, come to his Saviour, trying to put away the thought that might hurt his soul, I could not but wonder why we ever doubt the power of God's grace. To see that man, a Christian, praying with his family, training his children, seems indeed a miracle; yet it is even so; and then, to see him troubled at his secret thoughts, thoughts that perhaps we, more advanced ones, would pass by unobserved. This was a pleasant visit, for I felt so grateful to God, and was filled with wonder for all his goodness to man. It seemed the devil must feel himself bound hand and foot, and his kingdom shaken when poor J., turning his back upon bondage and chains, pressed onward to liberty and the land of promise. The Holy Spirit being his teacher, the Son his intercessor, may he learn daily, both

in thought and action, to do more and more the will of his heavenly Father. Another husband and wife sealed for eternity.

"Liberty Street! How I love that walk. Good, faithful Mrs. H., so depressed; the loss of her boy seems to have crushed her, yet she can speak for her Saviour. I call her my missionary. She seems to have gained by her consistent example the esteem of the whole street. Susie T., gentle and kind, but not so earnest as might be. Amanda, brave, open, and sincere; ready to do anything pointed out as right.

"Poor Mary L.! She is one dark spot in my work, which grows larger and larger. I find her drunk almost every time I go there; scarcely ever in condition to be instructed. Soon again to become a mother, and yet so debased; it is a pitiable sight. Often I find her little children almost naked, and so filthy. The house wretched, so close, so loathsome, it is difficult to stay in it. Poor soul! she seems bent on her own destruction. My heart aches for her. At times she seems touched, and you can see the better life struggling to break through this load of depravity. I often think, as I look at her, of the lepers who were cleansed, of the blind who received sight, and of the deaf who heard. I know just such miracles of grace can now be performed, and I wonder if I pray enough for poor Mary. At times she has said resolutely, 'I *will* change, I *will* pray,' but vice has an iron grip upon her, and she is powerless, because she will not cling to the One mighty to save, and call on the stronger than the strong one for help.

"Good Mrs. S. to-day seemed filled with desire to do something for others. She says, 'I am a poor talker, but couldn't I do something else?' I recalled poor Betty D., sitting up at night, after her day of toil in the factory, to mend and make, and I asked her if she could help her.

With tearful eyes she caught at the suggestion, saying, 'Oh, yes, if they would let me do it.' I feel sometimes I could sit at the feet of this humble follower of the Lamb; more often am I taught by her than she by me.

"Another visit to my Charley to-day. Sunday noon, and he not dressed; been all the morning cleaning wagons to go with a firemen's parade on Monday. He was so ashamed he sent one of his children into their little parlor to ask me to excuse him. I sent in word I had seen him in his working clothes before. He was eating dinner. I made a pretext to go out into the kitchen. He looked mortified, and told me how he had spent the morning. I said, 'Charley, it was the dirt inside you were ashamed of more than that outside.' He replied, 'You're right; I am ashamed; it won't happen again.' 'Charley, how often have you deluded yourself thus! won't you dress and come to church this afternoon?' 'I can't, indeed, I promised to go back to the fellows.' 'And you *will parade* to-morrow?' 'Yes, I expect to.' 'Well, Charley, do you know there is an enemy of yours going to-morrow?' 'No,' replied he, 'they are all friends.' 'But you will have an enemy who will take hold of the ropes with you, or sit by you when you dine, and will do his best to bring you into trouble; he knows just *how* to do it, and intends to do it.' 'Oh, I understand you now, but I promise I will look out for him.' 'Well, Charley, a soldier always takes weapons to protect himself, and in old times they always put on armor to turn away the darts of the enemy; now you are going to battle to-morrow, come with me and get the armor.' He looked down, and said, 'Wait till next Sunday.' It crossed my mind that if he did go and fall again, perhaps it would do him good, and show him how weak he was; he must learn by sad experience. So I said, 'Well, Charley, I will not urge,—I only advise; good-by, my friend.' Monday passed, and sad indeed was the result for

poor Charley; no armor, no sword of the Spirit, all alone; what could we hope? He fell powerless under the enemy. I have not yet seen him, and have only heard of his shame. So weak, poor fellow!

"I went to see J. again, or rather to see the wife and new baby, which is to be my namesake. I am not partial to namesakes, but this one I shall always think of with pleasure. Amanda said, 'I told Mrs. —— we were going to name our baby for you, but I feared you would not like it. You found us in darkness and brought us to light, and for this we want to name her after you. Mrs. —— told us you would be pleased, if we did it for that.' I do not think I shall be likely to forget this child, named with such a thought in the minds of both father and mother.

"In my visiting to-day, I met with some instances which I think would remove from the minds of many *two* errors. First, the idea that our people are pressed into the Church without proper knowledge of their obligations, and consequently are in danger of relapsing into their old habits or even worse. I was with many of the communicants to-day. One woman said to me, 'Some people don't like Mr. ——'s preaching; but I think the lectures he gives on Wednesday evenings bring me nearer to Christ every time I go. I cannot bear to stay away, he has made it so clear to me how the Holy Spirit works in our souls. I didn't know how to pray to the Spirit before.'

"Another said, 'Oh, I do love mothers' meeting. I am so tired sometimes when I go, but it just rests me to hear Mrs. —— pray, and to see the ladies so happy and ready to help us do good.'

"Another, my poor friend Betty D., leaned over when I was reading, to listen, and learn one sentence to carry with her to the factory; for, she says, 'At home, when all seems so noisy, poor Jim doing the work, I see so many things to do, I must leave undone, that I get worried. I

kneel down and can't think; but at the factory I forget it, and I think and pray. I am all alone then, you know, and God is near, and I pray so hard, and wish I could only read the Bible.'

"Another, when I remarked what happiness it was to have her husband a Christian, said, 'Oh, yes, I could sing any time, it is such joy to be this way, all changed.'

"Are these things not evidences of the work of the Spirit in these hearts? Would they thus *press* to the fountain if they did not thirst? They may come into the fold, poor ignorant wanderers, but they know enough to realize they need the shepherd's care, they know enough to feel the need of the pasture to keep them strong, the fresh, living water to revive their drooping souls. I think it will not be asked by the Lord of the harvest whether they understood all the forms of our beautiful Church, all the doctrines taught in the Prayer-Book before or even after they cast themselves at the foot of the Cross, and trusted entirely in the all-cleansing blood for their souls' salvation. I find it very easy to teach them these things, and do it as much, as rapidly, and as perfectly as opportunity will permit.

"The other error is the popular opinion that these people come for what they get, and are injured by the assistance rendered them. In my view, in our anxiety to avoid this charge, we have not assisted them enough. I often long for means to relieve where I know it would do good to the body and soul. I think harm may be done either by doing too little or too much. I would not encourage pauperism, but I cannot teach calmly, when I see these children of toil struggling against the great weight which poverty, sickness, pain, and anxiety hang about their necks. I believe it easy for a discerning mind to draw the line and be able to do a great deal for Christ's poor, Christ's degraded, without making them dependent. We have been so careful not to harm our poor by doing much for them,

that I have thought of late the engine might make *too* many revolutions, and the balance-wheel fly in pieces. We might make the tension too great and snap the thread, and mar the beauty of our work.

"This is only my opinion formed from observation. I may be wrong, but when, to-day, I took poor Betty D. five dollars, the gift of our pastor, and gave it to her, she said, 'I am grateful, and need it, but I can hardly take it; it sits hard on Jim to be helped; we would rather do without anything possible than take anything.'

"This is my last month's work with these people. It is with a sad heart I find all must be resigned; circumstances make it imperative. It is the very joy of my life to be engaged in this work, and to part with these, my spiritual children, makes me feel as though the shades of death had gathered about me. I almost broke down to-day when Betty said, 'I heard you would leave us; oh, do not go! Jim says you have done more good to him than any one in the world; he would not know what to do if you leave him; he watches so for your coming.' I choked down the rising grief, tried to feel that God knew best, and cheered her by saying, 'I had not gone yet.'

"Wherever I may be, you and your good work shall not be forgotten. Often my heart will go back, and in imagination I shall walk through Liberty Street, that garden filled with plants (once overgrown with weeds), lifting their heads towards the sun; catching the dewdrops of the Spirit—growing in beauty—which I hope to see bloom in the garden of eternity. May God have them ever in his keeping, shall be my prayer!"

THE SOCIAL ELEMENT A DIVINE POWER.

The organization of a parish may be complete, and the personal ministration of some of its members may give evidence of zeal, yet it will lack true Christian unity, and fail in true Christian efficiency, until communicants who are in good social position learn to feel and to act like the prodigal's *father*, rather than like his elder brother. Envious feelings, generated by the unequal distribution of wealth and of other social advantages, are allayed by Christianity when the rich and the cultivated manifest an active spiritual interest in their less favored brethren. Social distinctions are never disturbed by these voluntary sacrifices of personal comfort for the spiritual benefit of others; indeed, an instinctive reverence for Christian virtue adds to their power. In the world, the distinctions of society must be strongly marked; but surely the Church is bound to follow the example and instruction of her Lord and his Apostles, by making adequate provision for the social yearnings of all sorts and conditions of men.

Efforts to socialize working people by drawing them from their cottages, or from those dens of iniquity called "tenement-houses," often end in bitter disappointment, owing to the too free use of *money and clothing* as socializing agencies, instead of relying mainly on the divine power that issues from a genial, sympathizing Christian heart. The sordid, indolent, and dissolute are readily brought by temporal lures to social meetings in the Church, and some are no doubt benefited; but it is to be feared that in many persons so gathered in, self-deception and hypocrisy are increased, and it is known that in such cases many of the industrious and virtuous working people refuse to attend, lest sordid motives should be attributed to them. If the Church, the Bride of Christ, really believes that she has a genial, sympathizing heart, and that its free use by

people as well as by minister is needful to enable her to countervail the fearful work of the devil, satanic manifestations should only the more thoroughly stir her up to good works.

As few *male* communicants in good position seem willing to give out the socializing power which God has intrusted to them for the benefit of persons less highly favored, it will be well to commence this great work by employing godly women ; and not a few of these are now evidently incited to this duty by the Holy Spirit. Women of the highest qualifications usually have much native diffidence, but they may begin by a visit to some invalid or ignorant person designated by the minister, and they will gradually but surely learn to use their spiritual and social powers advantageously to the Church.

In London, the socializing powers of Christian women have been so freely employed, that mainly through their influence large numbers of working people have been brought into a living connection with the Church. In such parishes special services are provided, and the Holy Communion is administered early in the morning, at noon, and in the evening, in order that the persons poorly clothed, or those who have engagements at the usual hour, may participate in the sacred feast. In England, the minister has far greater difficulty in training his workers than is experienced in this country, because there persons in good social position very rarely attend a Sunday-school or Bible-class. In America the most cultivated have very generally been either pupils or teachers, and are therefore better prepared to enter upon aggressive missionary work. A practical female diaconate can at once be created by every parish minister, and where this agency has been tested judiciously and perseveringly, its success has been very great.

A series of papers bearing on woman's work was collected for publication in another form, but since there is

an increasing desire through the Church to extend the sphere of woman's usefulness, it has been thought best to publish these articles in the SPIRIT OF MISSIONS, whose rapidly-increasing circulation gives evidence that it is widely read and appreciated.

The following paper contains suggestions of great value, indicating a kind of parish work, in which Christian women may easily and efficiently employ their social powers. Where even one judicious, earnest Christian woman can be induced to co-operate with her minister in visiting, teaching, and praying with her neglected sisters, proof abundant will be found that the social element is indeed a divine power.

W.

"You ask me to give you some hints as to the best method of commencing and conducting a mothers' meeting.

"I take it for granted that you are familiar with the locality in which you purpose to work; if so, you can readily select from among the mothers of the Sunday-school children, some three or four of the more respectable class, who will form a nucleus for your association. At first you will need no assistance, for you should begin with few members, and you ought to become thoroughly acquainted with these before adding to the number. Do you ask how, with your little experience, you can conduct such a work by yourself? I reply, that a clear, practical head, and a sympathizing heart, with earnest love to the Saviour and the souls for which He died, are what you most need, for experience will be gained as you go on. Of course, the mothers' meeting is to be distinctively a Church work, so that you will have the sanction and counsel and co-operation of your rector.

"Imagine yourself, then, on the appointed evening, in a pleasantly-heated and brightly-lighted room, the centre

of a little group of mothers. Kindly sympathy, real interest (they can readily detect the counterfeit), will make them feel that they are with a friend who wishes to promote their happiness. A little pleasant chat on their home affairs, as they sit about you with their work, or it may be their babies, will give you an acquaintance with the condition of each family, and this may occupy an hour. You will then bring out Bibles and Prayer-Books, sing a hymn, read a scripture narrative, or some striking portion of another character, talk familiarly with them about it, and close with prayer.

"You will now but have commenced the work, for these weekly meetings are only a small part of it, although of great value in drawing out neglected ones, and binding them socially to the Church. These women must be faithfully visited in their homes, read to, talked to, prayed with individually, and closely followed up, if the greatest spiritual influence is sought for. Your visit will soon be looked for as the event of the week. 'I began to think you were never coming;' 'I felt so down yesterday, and if you had but come for five minutes, you would have cheered me up, and done me good for the rest of the day.' Such will be the welcomes you will receive.

"As the number increases, you must have help; and here I would urge you to select, when possible, not only earnest Christians, but women of education and refinement. It raises the poor in their own esteem, and increases their self-respect, to feel that they are cared for by ladies. In regard to the better classes, such as the American workingman and his family, people seem to feel that they would resent approaches of this sort as an interference. Such has not been my experience. Let them see that you are actuated by pure motives; that you go to their houses, not as a spy or a patroness, but as a friend, and you will be welcomed by them as warmly as by the dependent poor. Their

trials are of another kind, perhaps, but they have human hearts which need the Christian sympathy you can give, and they will soon find it almost a necessity to them.

"While you assign to your assistants the immediate care of certain families, you will retain the supervision of the whole, visiting all at intervals, and some more frequently, as you learn from the reports of your committee that circumstances render a call important.

"You will probably find some among your mothers who cannot read and write; for these you will certainly be able to find teachers among the younger members of the parish, who may also, with propriety, under the direction of an older lady, visit them statedly, and read to them. Another benefit to be derived from such ministrations, by the young, is that they will thus be gaining some experience, and at least the habit of going among the poor, which will fit them, in their turn, to become members of your committee.

"Various branches of industry may be attended to with profit in the mothers' meeting,—knitting stockings, cutting out and fitting dresses, tailoring, and even plain sewing, in which many mothers are lamentably deficient, because many of them have worked in factories, or been put out to service while yet children, so that their domestic education has been sadly neglected.

"You ask if I think a clothing club an essential in these associations. By no means an essential, but an important adjunct, after your meeting is fully established, always remembering that a clothing club should be conducted on the principle of every woman paying the full value for all the material she receives. If you sell clothing at half-price, you seem to hold out this as an inducement to attend the meeting, and thus help to perpetuate a spirit of dependence, while the object is rather to teach them the importance of saving small sums, with which they can eventually purchase, for themselves, real comforts. In the parish with

which our meeting is connected, there has been no Dorcas Society for three years, in consequence of our having formed a clothing club.

"As to the religious services, your rector will only be too glad to delegate to you that which a woman can do so well for women. There are many points which go to make up practical religion upon which these women need instruction,—their duties as wives and mothers, even to the minutest details of care of their homes and children, and hints as to nursing,—over and above the sympathetic, heart-to-heart talk about their condition as sinners, their many temptations and weaknesses, and the overflowing love of Christ to their souls; and upon these points only a woman who has had like experiences can well expatiate.

"Some arrangement for giving efficient help in protracted sickness, providing medicines and nurses, with loans of bedding and personal clothing, is an all-important aid. This takes money? Not nearly as much as is required for a Dorcas Society; and where is the parish in which this, or a sewing society of some sort, does not exist?

"We must ever bear in mind that the end for which all our labors are performed, is to bring our mothers to the Saviour of sinners, and, through these social organizations, into a cordial, loving connection with the Church which He purchased with his own blood. We mothers well know what it is to pass nights of watching with our little ones, and the weariness of mind that ensues from constant contact with the hourly wants, the pettishness, the unceasing restlessness of our children. What a boon is the interruption of a friendly visit! How delightfully tranquil are our evenings when these little ones are tucked in for the night, and we can leave them trustingly to the care of a faithful nurse! But these poor mothers have no such relaxation. Superadded to the care of their children, is the

cleansing of the house, the washing, cooking, mending, and making, and the constant strain to make both ends meet. To such what a blessing is the mothers' meeting, viewed only in its social aspect! I have seen women, worn out with care and labor, walk a mile to have an hour of such social enjoyment. They say, 'It rests me, body and mind, to go to mothers' meeting. The week does not seem the same when I am kept away.' The meeting with an old friend or neighbor, the comparing their daily experiences, the intercourse with the lady visitor (who, as a rule, should never be absent from these meetings),—what a break in the daily routine of their monotonous lives! Again, the influence is elevating, for there are grades in their social life, and it is a pleasant thing to see, as I have seen, the wife of a respectable mechanic take her sewing and sit beside one of humbler rank, not because she knew her, for she did not, but, 'Poor thing, she ought to have better companions than she has.'

"There is one more point connected with the social aspect of our work to which it may be well to refer here, viz., *the importance of the lady visitors worshiping with those whom they visit.* I make this remark especially in reference to mission chapels, the workers in which usually worship in the parish church. You ask a man to go to church; he goes, but does not find his friends there; sees no one, perhaps, whom he knows; is a stranger to the services, and cannot use a Prayer-Book, if one, by chance, is offered him, and probably never goes again. Do you wonder at it? Is there any place more lonely than a strange church, even to us who value the ministrations of the gospel for the gospel's sake? How cold and cheerless to go in and out and never receive a welcoming smile, or a cordial grasp of the hand! What must it be, then, to one who goes to church for the first time (as is often the case), simply to gratify a person who has shown some kindness, or, as I

have heard scores say, 'Because she showed so much interest in me, and tried so hard to get me there!' 'The rich and the poor meet together'—where so appropriately as in the house of Him who is 'the maker of them all'? The social feeling in our nature must be met. Do I hear it said, 'Higher motives should be appealed to;' 'People should go to church from a sense of duty'? How about those who do not feel it as a duty, and who have yet to learn to value it as a privilege? Let them go to gratify a friend, and, if they find a cordial home feeling there, they will go again, because they are beginning to feel interested, and will one day love it for its own sake, and for the sake of the Saviour whom they have thus learned to love.

"Our committee meets once a month, when each lady presents her report of visits made, new families brought to her notice, children and adults gathered into Sunday-schools and Bible-classes, and also occasionally gives a narrative of interesting facts connected with her visiting. This affords an opportunity for interchange of sentiments, for older and more experienced visitors to give hints to younger ones, for submitting to the Principal, matters in which advice is needed, and for uniting in prayer for God's blessing on the work.

"In conclusion, I will give you some extracts from these reports which will illustrate the principles on which our work is conducted, and afford encouragement to those who desire to engage in similar Christianizing and socializing agencies.

"One lady writes: 'Have just returned from a few visits that have given me much comfort. How good is my Father so signally to bless such a feeble instrumentality as mine! In one cheerless home I was greeted with delight by four little children. Their mother was out, so they must do the honors of their humble home. The youngest, a little girl of about two years, with an arch expression,

looks in my face and lisps, "I love you." The other three expressed like affection, asked me to come soon again and shouted "good-by" to me until I was out of sight.

"'The next visit was to a young mother, whose home was dirty and comfortless. She has but recently joined our meeting, so I must not venture to speak of her untidy house and children. We must become better acquainted. I must gain her affection, and then show her her duty. I had not been seated long when she said, "I think, Mrs. ——, your visits to Mrs. J. have done her good. She has not drank anything since you have visited her. She seems a much better woman." I felt encouraged to hear this, and went, after leaving there, to see Mrs. J. I found her reading her Bible. She grasped my hand with evident signs of pleasure, wiped off the best chair for me, and requested me to be seated, saying, "I'm so glad to see you! your visits do me a world of good, ma'am. I know now that God has not forsaken me. I know that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. I have comfort and peace now." I sat some time with her, having a most interesting visit. As I rose to leave she followed me to the door, and her last words were, "Please, ma'am, come soon again to see me! When will you come?"

"'I cannot close my report without writing something very astounding. Mr. —— expects, and almost promised, to meet me at church next Sunday! His wife also promised to have a clean shirt ready for him. No one can appreciate this but myself. I can only say that never since I commenced this work have I seen a couple so vile, so hardened, so wretchedly lost to all shame, without any hope. Often have I been told in that house that they knew they were going to hell. The man himself has treated me so rudely I have feared to enter his house. Only when I thought of the work to be done for Christ could I gain courage to go. Now, when I go, his eyes have filled with

tears when he has told me he felt the interest I took in him. He urges me to stay,—not to make a short visit. She, poor woman, seems to human eyes beyond all hope, but the Holy Spirit can touch even this heart.

"'I have never, I believe, in any other house, been treated unhandsomely. I am always greeted with kindness, and this makes the way so easy to speak of Jesus. This is a blessed work, and one which well repays us. It is such a happy hour for us, when, for the first time, we see our women kneeling together at the Table of the Lord. Sweet are our visions of future glory for those who, a short time before, knew not the Saviour.'

"Another writes: 'At our last meeting you spoke to us of the apparent falling off in the attendance of our women, and desired us to look into and ascertain the causes. In my work this month I have diligently searched out the reason for the seeming want of interest among those in my care, hoping it might be a help and satisfaction for you to know as far as I could gather.

"'Some of them have increased family relations. One woman, who has two children, only eighteen months apart, with a husband who will not be troubled with his children, tells me she longs to come and misses it so much, it used to be such a break in her cares, but her last baby is delicate and very troublesome. I asked her about her spiritual state; if she could still cling to the promises, being thus debarred from the public means of grace. She replied that she sometimes found it hard to get over her difficulties, and thought she did not bear them as well as formerly, but she endeavored to get to the Communion as often as possible, and that helped her not to get too dark.

"'With another woman I found the "little stranger" had confined her at home, but she said, "I will not lose my interest, so long as you talk so to me; your visits are such a help to me." I found her earnestly instructing her little

children in the knowledge of the love of Jesus. This made me satisfied with her, though she seemed to feel she was very much like the lamb I had told her of, that had been enticed from the fold by the pleasant hills beyond the pasture-ground, fearing she took too much pleasure in being with her children. I looked at her in admiration as I thought of some mothers in a different walk in life who forget this sacred obligation in the haunts of pleasure. She said mothers' meeting had been a blessing to her, and she missed it now. No Thursday evening passed over without regrets that she could not leave her charge, except when Charley would stay at home.

"'One old woman had given up to great despondency consequent upon the death of her husband,—a Christian woman, but she had let her affliction harden her. She promised to pray against it.

"'In some I find indifference. One, who had been addicted to drinking, I find has given way somewhat, and deadness seems to have grown over the house. Perhaps they have not been as faithfully watched over and built up as they should have been. Several of my women told me they had heard when I left home for my health, that I had given up visiting entirely, and not seeing me so frequently this fall as they used to, they had felt the loss of my visits, and Thursday evening did not seem the same when I was not there. This I believe to be the most important knowledge I have gained in my investigation. These women depend greatly upon the constant contact and personal interest they have in the lady who visits them. Though they are all devoted to the Principal, yet they seem to miss their habitual visitor, and as they remarked, Thursday evening was not the same when I was not there. This is very natural, if we look into our relations with these people. For instance, if I have been at the house of a woman, who is in trouble, either spiritually or otherwise, and she has un-

burdened her heart to me, and God has enabled me to comfort her, she naturally yearns to see me again. This is human. She comes on Thursday evening, her heart perhaps softened, ready to be guided or comforted. To her disappointment she does not find me, and before she may see me again the good seed may be rooted up. To keep up the interest of these people, with surroundings so foreign to a higher life, our instruction must be "line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little." I asked one woman, "Do you not think so-and-so is impressed, and likely to feel a deep interest?" "Yes, if you follow it up." So our labor must be systematic and uninterrupted.

"'I observe an increased interest among the Christians under my care, which is an evidence, I think, that God is with us,—an interest not only in themselves, but also in others, and an anxiety to do good and to see souls coming to the truth. There is one among them whom I call "My Missionary." She rouses all around her on Thursday evening; stops for them, and brings them to the meeting. She is a real warm-hearted Christian. I find her quite a comfort, and I dare say there are many such among our people, if we would try and draw them out.'"

"LIGHT IN THEIR DWELLINGS."

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND has for centuries emitted pure gospel light, yet many of the homes of her working people are still in heathen darkness. The Archbishop of York (at the last annual meeting of the Diocesan Home Mission) stated that "in one district of London, not one person in

one hundred attends a place of worship; and that drunkenness, brawling, blasphemy, and other sins are fearfully prevalent."

Published statistics state that in many cities and rural districts in England, Scotland, Ireland, and in the United States, dissoluteness and crime are on the increase.

Temporizing expedients may stay the tide of corruption, but all human barriers must eventually give way, and then for a season the flood will become irresistible. Dissolute parents may be incarcerated, and their children taken from them forcibly, or they may be encouraged to hand to the care of strangers, children whom God has committed to *them;* but the family bond is thus severed, although it is evidently God's will that it should be strengthened.

After a series of costly and often injurious experiments, it has now become apparent to intelligent Christians that working people must have "*light in their dwellings,*" for the divine power of the family organization is the most important agency of the Christian Church.

On the occasion already referred to, the Archbishop of York appealed thus to his hearers:

"Who are these people? They are your brothers and sisters; the very people who are laboring for you, and who assist in ministering to your luxury. You live in a splendid temple. These are the foundation stones laid that your palace may stand upon them. They are a class, I say, that belongs to you most essentially. A hundred years ago people used to say, 'There are some social problems which it is impossible to solve; wicked people will be wicked; and you cannot get at the poor people at all.' But the moment that some measure of success has attended any institution of this kind, all that comfortable philosophy crumbles and vanishes. They are of the same flesh and blood as we are. If you take the eternal gospel, that never

loses its power, and apply that instrument to one of these consciences, the effect will be the same as it has been with any of you; it will be to make them know that there is such a thing as sin; that there exists a God, and that they may not live apart from Him. I know that, the Holy Spirit helping your labors, you may rouse in them the same goodness and gentleness, the same peace, joy, long-suffering, which are the graces of the Christian character."

In referring to mothers' meetings as a means of Christianizing such homes and families, the Archbishop further showed that gross darkness was in their households; for in one such organization, composed of seventy members, half were unmarried, although living with men and having children.

Ladies who have the oversight of several mothers' meetings in London, during a recent visit to this country, gave a hopeful picture of the influence of these associations in dispelling heathen darkness by bringing light and life to the homes of working people, and even into the dens of infamy. These holy women do not argue or reprove; they read and tell of *Jesus*, and of his salvation so freely offered; and often feel deeply censurable for not having sooner communicated the glad tidings of salvation. The heart of one poor degraded woman was melted when she first heard her visitor read from God's book,—"They spit upon Him." Even with her deep degradation, she instinctively shrank from the disgrace that divine love delighted to bear for her sake.

The effect of sunlight on the vegetable kingdom is hardly too strong an illustration of the influence produced on the family relation by the visits of experienced ladies who possess intelligence and Christian sympathy.

To aid beginners, a visitor of a successful mothers' meeting has consented to the publication of the following extracts from her private diary: W.

September, 1865.

M——: I have at your desire been reading the brief notes taken by me more than five years ago, and comparing the life of some of those people in the time of their ignorance of the truth, with the present. "Time is the sure test of all things." The mind is naturally doubtful about experiments, and it may be some are still skeptical in regard to God's process of awakening and warming inanimate souls into life by the contact of other human hearts made tender and sympathetic by the power of redeeming love. Living, breathing monuments of the permanency of our work rise up before me as I peruse these old pages, proving beyond all doubt that God is with us. The Spirit, making use of the weak things of earth, has wrought mighty things. To Him be all the glory and honor. The work was commenced in much trembling and weakness, and with humility and gratitude do we behold the desolate places made glad and the wild waste places now blossoming with a Saviour's love.

I will give you the notes as they were originally written in my private book, and at the close, a brief sequel.

January 1st, 1861.—Received a notice from the rector stating that I had been appointed one of the committee of the mothers' meeting.

3d.—Commenced my duties.

18th.—Received from the principal a list of the names of the women whom she had placed under my charge, to visit regularly, and inquire into their spiritual and temporal condition.

19th.—Made my first visits,—eight. Called first upon Mrs. C——z, whom I found comfortable. Her husband was at work, sober and industrious. A pleasant, healthy-looking Englishwoman. I learned from her that she had been confirmed in her native country at the age of seventeen. Coming to a strange country, engrossed in family affairs, and not feeling at home in her own church, had

gradually become careless of her Christian obligations, and am sorry to add, still feels indifferent, though she likes very much to come to the meetings.

At the next call, found one of the mothers (Mrs. C——w) with a sick infant. Seeing two other children, apparently under four years of age, I remarked, "Are these children all yours, Mrs. C——w?" She replied in the affirmative. The house was close, to suffocation; everything betokened want of thrift and good housewifery; both the mother and the children were untidy; everything had a repulsive appearance about the house. Her husband, who was at home, and without employment, made me understand he did not appreciate my visit by turning his back upon me, and taking no notice of my presence. I expressed sorrow at the sickness of his child, when, with a dry "*yes*," he walked out of the room. I thought to myself, my friend, you have at least the virtue of honesty; that is a good point to begin with. The woman informed me he made six dollars per week. He was an intemperate man, and at times abusive. So far had he trodden the path of error and sin, that he was sinking deeply in the black gulf of infidelity, the seeds of which had been sown by an infidel lecturer who had passed some time in the town, leaving his impress upon the souls of many of the ignorant and degraded. This woman I found very ignorant, and from her manner of addressing her children, I judged it to be a badly-regulated family. She seemed slow to understand the gospel truth, and realized little her responsibility to God. I thought she seemed anxious to be taught. From early childhood until some years after her marriage she worked in a factory. She said she never knew what it was to stay at home with her children until after she came to this country. Hers had been a life of few opportunities.

The next upon my list for the day was Mrs. N——, a native of Rhode Island. Their only room was a basement.

In one corner stood a bed, nicely made and clean; in another a table, at which were sitting her young husband and little child, eating their dinner, which appeared to be frugal enough. She was washing for a person at whose store they obtained groceries upon credit. Her husband had been without employment for four months, had formerly been a sailor, was temperate. Their room was cold and cheerless, with few articles of furniture, but all clean. She was ignorant almost of the alphabet; this her husband had been trying to teach her. Her manner was modest and pleasant. Their religious education had been almost entirely neglected. The years of her childhood had been passed in hard labor. She had lost her father when very young, and was placed among strangers. With a mind naturally tending to good, she had been much impressed by what she had heard at the "mothers' meeting." "She had heard so much about Jesus there," and "guessed it must be a good kind of thing to be a Christian."

22*d*.—Made four visits among the poor. Found but little interest shown for their eternal welfare. One woman, who had part of her life attended an Episcopal church, and for many years had gone to the Methodist meeting, said she had learned more since she had gone to the mothers' meeting than she had ever known before. Another told me she had almost forgotten how to pray; had neglected to do it for years. It made her think of her mother the first night she was at the mothers' meeting, and the tears would come to her eyes.

30*th*.—Made eleven visits. One woman I am very much interested for. A pretty Englishwoman, not very tidy in person, and a very dirty house, but with some excuse, having a large family and very little room. She was born of pious parents, and was a Sunday-school scholar until grown. Her father held a pew in the Church of England forty-five years. His last words to her were, "My daughter, wherever

circumstances in life place you, never forget you are a Christian, or to go to church. Remember your old father standing in this church, and beware of the temptations of the world." "And oh, I have forgot all this, Mrs. ——!" She had been confirmed at the age of seventeen; afterwards went to service in an infidel family; soon began to lose her interest in religion, and at last almost to forget she had taken Christian vows upon herself. The severe trials she was called upon to bear in her married life, instead of humbling her, made her rebellious and passionate in temper. Her husband, who was a pious young man, left her to come to this country. She followed him, after the lapse of three years, and, to her great sorrow, found him most terribly changed,—he had become a miserable drunkard. She had a wretched life for five years. The death of a child and severe illness of her husband awakened her for a short time; but after a little these good impressions passed away. She had no clothes then to go to church in, and was thus deprived of the public means of grace. So she continued until induced to go to the mothers' meeting. The first prayer she heard there recalled her Sunday-school teachings and the prayers of her good parents, and softened her heart. She has never been absent since; she feels it good for her to be there, and has become very anxious about her soul. Her husband has refrained from intoxicating drinks for four months. She feels this is more than she deserves.

One woman, who did not so much as know what the Lord's Supper was, and lived within sound of the church-bell, said she "did feel good at mothers' meetings,—she kind of forgot her troubles there." She had never been taught anything about the Bible, only knew what she heard occasionally.

Another said she supposed it was right to be a Christian, but she did not know how she could be one. She could not hear or understand all the preacher said when she did

go to church, which was not often, for she did not feel at home there. She would like her children to be good, so she sent them to school to learn.

10th and 11th of February.—Made eleven visits. One of my women, who had led a profligate life, was concerned about her soul; in her own language, was "afraid of God's anger for the dreadful life she had led." I learn from her that she was placed in the House of Refuge when only eight years old, for lying and violence of temper. When removed from there she joined a Sunday-school, and tried to be a good girl. Her health not being good, she came here and went into a factory. It was then she fell from the path of virtue, and she continued to lead a dissolute life until brought low upon a bed of sickness. She says that many times her heart has been softened, and she faintly desired a better life, but never had moral courage to try long. I found her reading a library book,—the history of one like herself. I said to her, "Eliza, what makes you want to lead a new life,—because you are sorry for the past, or because you are tired of such a life?" She said, Because I am afraid to die, as this girl did (pointing to the book), and have no hope."

Mrs. C——w asked me many questions about salvation, such as, whether they should be lost if they did not profess Christianity. Her husband treated me with about as much civility as on my first visit. I spoke to him kindly, and offered him my hand, which he took, and relaxed his face into something like a smile. I said nothing to him upon the state of his soul, but talked to him about his temporal affairs, thinking it better to try and gain his kind feelings before I attempted anything for his soul's good, fearing I might be casting pearls before swine.

From 18th to 20th.—Made fifteen visits. Called again upon Eliza, feeling anxious to know the influence of the Holy Spirit upon such a heart as hers,—one so depraved and sunk in the mire of guilt. She expressed great sor-

row for the past,—more sorrow, I thought, for what it had brought her to, than for the sin itself and disobedience to her Maker. I fear God has not touched her heart with the knowledge of his undying love. She said she knew the Bible told her that Christ saved such as she is, when upon earth, but she could not *feel* it. "Oh, do tell me the reason!" I told her I was afraid she was holding back something,—was not willing to give up all. Her mother, who had been a very depraved woman, seemed to have a heart of stone, and was so exceedingly repulsive in her hard, unfeeling manner, it seemed almost an insult to the Saviour to tell her of his love,—she received it with such cold unconcern. The other daughter, who, I had been told, had led a very dishonest life in every way, seemed to realize she had a soul, but was not sensible of having been a great sinner. I thought, on my way home, what a load of sin had the Holy Spirit to work his way through in the hearts of this family! I felt the work had commenced, but how long it would be before He could illuminate those dark minds with the light of divine truth! I feel my utter inability to help in this great work, but humbly pray that God will strengthen me, as He has been pleased to repose some trust in me.

Found one of my women desirous to be led in the way of truth; she said that the words of our Principal went to her heart. She said, "Oh, how she can talk to sinners about their ways! The mothers' meeting is the best place I have been led to go to since I was young and went to church."

Another woman was desirous to have her child of thirteen years confirmed, "because she felt as though she would like her to be saved from eternal hell, even if she was not." I said, "Why are you not anxious about yourself, when you feel it necessary for your daughter?" She replied that she hoped the time would come to her, but she was not ready. I asked her, "What had made her think about salvation?"

She said, "It came to me when the superintendent told them 'the time was at hand.'" Turning earnestly to me, she said, "I will never stay away from that early service, —I never knew anything before."

The conviction came to my own mind as it had not done before, that the Church was doing her legitimate work in opening her every door to the lost and straying sheep. By the work thus going on within her gates many a lingering and wandering one is enabled to hear the voice of the Good Shepherd, and is brought back to the fold. They feel the truth and power of the gospel when the Church stretches out her arms to receive them under all circumstances, and assures them that poverty need be no drawback,—that within her walls they can come clad in the garments of want, and hear from the lips of sympathizing Christians the story of the Cross.

One woman told me that she had almost given up in despair (though a professing Christian) when asked to join the mothers' meeting; but going there had helped her to trust in God. She was so thankful to have a visit from Christians. On a previous visit I had read to her from a little book, called the "Words of Jesus." She said, "Do read to me again that chapter upon the words 'It is I,' it spoke so to my heart. I was in trouble that day after you went away. I felt as though I must work harder for my salvation." She said, "I wish you would talk to my poor husband; he will not listen to a word for his soul." He came in whilst I was there. I stayed and talked to him, but could not see that I made any impression. I told her I would ask Mr. —— to come and see him, which I knew he would do; for he was delighted to hear of any one to whom he could tell the tidings of the gospel. She gratefully thanked me, and said, "Oh, do come often, Mrs. ——! I am never tired of seeing you. If you stay away I miss you."

27*th*.—Mrs. C——w sent for me; her little babe, who

had been sick, was dead. She said, "Oh, Mrs. ——, I so wanted you to come and read prayers over him before he died!" I told her that would no doubt have been a comfort to her, but made no difference to the child; it was safe in its home above. I asked her if she had had it baptized. She said she had. I told her she had then discharged her duty as far as she could, as it had been called away before other duties devolved upon her with regard to it. Her husband seemed overwhelmed by the loss, and treated me with more civility than usual. They had no money to defray the expenses of the burial, and seemed not to know how to do. A friend had asked one of his infidel friends to loan him five dollars in his extremity, which he refused, saying he did not have it; this C——w knew to be false. I gave him what was necessary, and he was so affected by it that he went to the factory to tell those who scoffed at God, that a Christian had given him, unasked, what an infidel had refused. I attended the funeral. The father suffered very much, being unable to give vent to his feelings. I talked to him for the first time about his soul. He said he "did not believe all the Bible said." I told him I did not wish to argue with him, but as he knew nothing against Christianity but what ungodly people told him, or he read in their books, it was but fair that he should read our side of the question, and listen to what we had to say in our own cause, *then* he could decide with more justice. He said, "Yes, you are right enough." I asked him if he would be willing to read anything I would give him. He said, "Yes, I will for *you*."

1*st of March.*—Made five visits. Called again upon Mrs. C——w, hoping that the death of her child might prove a blessing to the family. Learned that her husband was in danger of drowning his grief in intoxication. She seemed somewhat awakened to the state of her soul. She was going to church regularly now. "It is time I was doing some-

thing. After you read and prayed with me while my boy lay dead, I felt a great load lifted from me. I was almost suffocated with grief. After you prayed for us to come to the Lord and be a Christian family, and told me I had still a babe, a pure little angel in heaven, I felt so different, so comforted, and wanted to know more about the Saviour. Oh, how I wish I could read!" I read to her a long time. She listened eagerly, not seeming to want to lose any of it. I left a book for her husband to read. She remarked, "He will do it for you." I could not help thinking of my first visit and his uncivil treatment.

Called upon one of my women who had been confirmed in England, but had never partaken of the Sacrament. She said since she had gone to the mothers' meeting she had thought of her obligations, and had wanted some one to talk to her about it. This shows the good effect of visiting these people. This woman might have been awakened and the impressions have passed away, because she would not like to speak to any one herself, or would not have an opportunity of so doing, or of leaving her family while her mind was disturbed by these thoughts.

Another woman said to me, "I am so glad to see you. I just wanted to see some Christian. You don't know how we poor people feel encouraged when a lady calls and turns our minds from hard work for a little while, and makes us sit down and talk of the Saviour and the next world."

Another remarked, "Oh, that mothers' meeting! how much I have learned there! Why, I never knew anything before."

8th.—Thirteen visits. Find to-day my women full of inquiries about the confirmation, which is fast approaching. While in conversation with two of them, one asked, "How far is it off?" The other replied, "Only three weeks." The striking reply of the first inquirer was, "Are we sure we shall live three weeks? Oh, we ought to be ready!"

This woman had once been a Methodist, but had become careless. She was a pure-minded, simple-hearted woman. I talked and read with her an hour and a half. When going away she said, "Come soon; I want to know what to do." I told her our pastor would direct her,—she must go to him. She said she would. I have every faith in her. In the future I see her armed with a perfect trust in the religion of Jesus Christ.

Another woman, who was a Christian, said she was "so strengthened by going to the mothers' meeting." Our Principal always brought things so home to her. When she spoke to them she knew just how to tell them to meet their troubles.

Another, who was anxious about her soul, told me she was "thinking hard about what Mr. —— said of the jailkeeper being converted in one night." She said, "I took that all to myself. It came down on me with such force, because I was thinking about waiting until another confirmation. I thought to myself, What is time, when he was converted in one night? I will pray."

Mrs. W—— has given birth to a babe. I am glad to see her heart is seeking after her neglected Saviour. She wanted me to pray that she would not be tempted to neglect her good resolutions. "I feel I cannot live without God," was her remark. "How long will our mothers' meeting last?" I replied, "I hope until we all reach heaven." She said, "I am so thankful for that, for I can go there whether I have good clothes or not, and hear something to help me do right." She said she had been laughed at for going, because those who knew her knew she had a hasty temper; but it would not keep her from going, because it was there she had felt the first happy hour since she had forgotten her God. I told her that she would be strengthened against that temper. "Oh, yes, I will never forget that first prayer!"

Find Eliza W——n anxious to be confirmed, but do not

think she understands, and *hope* she is deceived herself rather than deceiving others.

Another woman, who had Christian teaching in her youth, and had made a profession of faith in the Methodist Church, but had become almost entirely indifferent, was deeply concerned about her condition. I asked her what had first caused her anxiety. She replied, "The visits which have been made to me through the mothers' meeting." She would not decide about becoming a member of the Episcopal Church; she loved to go there, but was fearful it might not be right, having once been a Methodist. I asked her if our service was tiresome. "*Oh, no; it is beautiful!*"

My friend Mrs. C——w is full of doubt and sorrow, not knowing what to do. "I feel so ignorant, Mrs. ——." I tried to make her understand that God would give her knowledge of his love, as well as grace to serve Him, if she *truly* desired it; pointed out to her many passages of Scripture to show her she could come "just as she was." She seemed to feel that she was a great sinner, but could not take knowledge of the plan of salvation. She promised to pray faithfully. I feel discouraged about her.

11*th.*—Made another visit to Mrs. C——w, and learn she is ready to give up all idea of making a profession of the faith. She seemed, to-day, to have lost every anxiety about herself; her whole demeanor was wild and stubborn,—evidently would rather talk of something else. I left her, feeling very sad, for she had been the subject of special prayer with me, and there was no answer.

19*th.*—Sickness at home has prevented me from visiting. To-day another visitor brought me the joyful intelligence that Mrs. C——w has come to the knowledge of the Lord Jesus, and, with deeply-humbled heart, desires to make a public profession of her faith. I was anxious to know by what means God had brought her to himself. Was told

that at the early service some words had come so powerfully to her soul, that she left the church with tears rolling down her cheeks. At the door she stretched out her hand to a friend, saying, "If God will help me, I will be a Christian; I am in earnest, indeed, I am!" How wonderful are God's ways,—past finding out! In a few days the bishop will be here.

April 22d.—Very many souls have come to know the length and depth of God's love. To-day, have been permitted by God to renew my work. Called first upon those who had been confirmed. Found Mrs. H—— upon her knees, much disturbed by severe trial of her faith. She welcomed me with more than ordinary warmth, saying, "I am so glad you have come just *this* day." The day previous a neighbor had spoken very severely to her about her husband wearing so shabby a coat to church, telling her Christians would blame her, and would not think so well of them for not making themselves look respectable. The remark had grieved her, and made her feel rebellious. To-day she felt humbled for her sinfulness, and was striving with the evil spirit, and praying earnestly for strength. She was so glad to have me come and advise her. I read and talked with her for some time. She bade me good-by with many expressions of gratitude, and spoke with tears of the blessings she had received through the mothers' meeting.

Another of my women who had been confirmed (Mrs. C——w), one who was a mere babe in the knowledge of the gospel, said she was so troubled because she felt she did nothing for God. When she heard of her Saviour's suffering, she said "it seemed a cold chill came over me to think He had borne that for me, that I might get to heaven. And oh, it is so hard for me to do right! I am so ignorant; 'tis so hard to pray. I cannot read, and I was never in the habit of praying,—never knelt down in my room and prayed for myself till you prayed for me by the side of my dead baby."

I told her of the blessed words of our Saviour, "Only believe," etc. I told her I would teach her to read, but she was so far from me. She said, "Oh, I will come to you, if I can leave the children. I want to read the Bible every day. When you read to me I always remember something; and every night, at the mothers' meeting, I learn another truth to take to my soul." The mothers' meeting has been a good thing for her. How would this woman have been reached in any other way? Certainly God's blessing rests upon the work. To-day I fully realized why so many of these people become backsliders. They so much need instruction; teaching that gives them "line upon line, precept upon precept." Surrounded by so many temptations, so much immorality; beholding Christians stiff-necked, unwilling to give them the hand of friendship, having no sympathy with their oppressed souls, and their surcharged hearts ready to break with their many cares, is it any wonder they go astray?

17*th*.—Made seven visits. Had a conversation with the husband of one of my women, who seldom attends church, and occasionally becomes intoxicated, though a good neighbor, kind at home, and will lend a helping hand in any trouble of those around him. I had promised his wife I would talk with him about going to church as soon as I had an opportunity. He told me, "I would not go and pretend to be what I am not, as some do." He said it hurt him so much. I asked him if he did not think there were some good men there. Oh, certainly; he would like to be like *them*. I told him he was a stumbling-block in the way of others when he refused to join them, and help them to find the evil and remedy their errors. I told him that good and evil work together now, as they did in the time of the Saviour's visit to the earth; that Judas was still with us; and I tried to show him that the chaff was separated from the wheat at the harvest,—not at the sowing time. He said he

never thought of that. When I left him he gave me his hand, saying, "I am going to think about it." Called on another of my women, — a Christian, — who was very anxious about her husband, the most *soulless* man I ever met. From his cold, light-blue eyes there beamed a perfect indifference to everything elevated above the grovelers. I felt powerless to talk with him, but made a feeble effort. From his answer and remark I almost felt as though I might be mistaken in supposing I was talking to a man. They were about taking their dinner, and his wife said to me, "I suppose you would not like to take a cup of tea with me?" I told her certainly I would, and sat down by them and took some tea from a china cup, which she said was the only one she had; she had brought it from England. Taking tea with this man seemed to please him far more than talking to him about his immortal soul. I endeavored to follow the subject up while he was in a less surly humor, but could not make any impression on him, though he parted with me far more pleasantly than he had met me.

Another of our women told me her husband was so pleased with my talking to him, he would like me to come often. He had finished a book I had loaned him, and had learned so much from it, he would like to have another. He never had been in a church except upon such an occasion as having the children baptized, but he had gone the Sunday before, and was so pleased, he thought he would go again. He is a man whose thoughts have been given up to saving money, and he has quite a little sum already.

25*th inst.*—Three visits. One of my men, who had been confirmed, met me with a smiling face, saying, as he held out his hands, "They don't shake now when I go to work. I feel so honest now when I go among my fellows, and I can look them straight in the face, and no whisky in my head." He had been but a few months ago a miserable

drunkard. An old woman, whose soul seemed filled with doubt and darkness, said to me, "Come again very soon. I'll never find the way alone; and I won't be here long." I told her she could pray; God was waiting to hear her, and she would not speak and ask his love. She said she was afraid; she had been told so much when she was young, and still had never done right, and she never could. I tried to show her that she *would* not; I read and talked with her, dwelling much on God's love; but still she wept with the sorrow of one without hope. Mind and body are both failing. How fearful is the responsibility of leaving the preparation for death until the dying hour! She thought, "If she only had her time to go over." I told her to pray for forgiveness for the past; but not to waste the time God was still allowing her, and have *that* also to regret all through eternity.

28*th.*—Made five visits. Called again on my old friend whose mind seemed so clouded. She said she had been praying, and added, "Would it not be good in God to forgive me and let me go to heaven?" I read with her, and she leaned over on her feeble knees listening eagerly, occasionally saying, as some familiar passage seemed to recall by-gone days, "Oh, that is what *he* used to say!" "How he did pray for me!" And the tears meanwhile were rolling down her face in penitential sorrow. I was very glad I was led to go to see her to-day. I think it very necessary to *follow up* these people at times when the Holy Spirit is at work in the heart, and not give the devil an opportunity of snatching the good seed. She seemed more hopeful at times, and then again desponding, during my visit.

15*th of May.*—Made eleven visits. Had a long conversation with Mr. C——w. Found he had very much modified his views. He said he had come to the conclusion there was something which he had never attained to; he

could not realize the sacrifice of the so-called Saviour, because he did not believe there could be any hell such as Christians described. He had once thought there was no God, but the more he thought, the more deeply he was convinced there was a great and good God, too good to make a hell. I had given him several books, all of which he had read with much care; among them, *McIlvaine's Evidences* and *Baxter's Call.* He was evidently searching for the truth. I told him he was right to search, God had given him an inquiring mind to use, but I wanted him to search prayerfully, leaning upon God, not upon himself; and endeavored to show him that otherwise he might waste his whole life and die without the knowledge and love of the Saviour. He said he would promise me to ask wisdom of God. I asked him if I should pray for him. He hesitated, and finally said, "You may if you please." He remarked, "I do know one thing, and that is that none do as *Christians* do; there must be good somewhere in it; but I feel no desire to be one. Why, I do not know." I think this man should be specially prayed for. His companions and fellow-workmen are the vilest of the town, infidels, blasphemers, and many of them degraded drunkards. I feel so sorry for his wife, who has just been brought to the knowledge of the Saviour, and is very anxious for him, but so ignorant herself she has to listen almost in silence to all that is said about her. Find a very great improvement in her house and children, also in the houses of many of my women.

One of my women, whom I called upon, said, "She tried to clean up a little nowadays," and asked if I thought it looked better. I could not say much for her, for her house is the most loathsome I ever enter. I am always obliged to stand or sit in the doorway to breathe freely. I was astonished to hear her speak of it in any way, she always seemed so insensible to it; her children, like the mother,

seem innately filthy. I think a radical change must be wrought before this family can realize their degradation, and love cleanliness so much as to practice it.

From the 22d to the 31st.—Made five visits.

From the 11th to the 19th of June.—Made six visits.

Have been absent some weeks. Found, upon my return, Mr. C——w was very ill; a few days after he died. Another visitor had a long conversation with him during my absence, in which he expressed his unwillingness to believe in eternal punishment. During his last hours he showed many signs of penitence; silent hours, because he was unable to speak.

Since the 1st of August, have made eighteen visits. From these people I have received many expressions of deep gratitude in various ways. During the extreme illness of one of my children, I daily received kind inquiries and sympathizing messages, showing that ready sympathy and refinement of feeling exist even among the most ignorant. A sailor, the husband of one of my women, brought me a very beautiful piece of coral and sea-fern. From one of my women I received a bouquet of new flowers. The most touching mark of gratitude was from an aged woman, who brought each of my little children a tiny china cup, which she had had in her chest forty years, and valued them as a child would a toy. The poor woman appears almost childishly attached to me; calls me her "good mother."

FIVE YEARS AFTER.

The mother so often mentioned, Mrs. C——w, is indeed a monument of grace; her light is one which burns not dimly. In her husband's death we had only the eleventh hour's hope, or that inspired by the cry of the dying thief. But the life of that poor ignorant wife and mother is a

shining light in her humble sphere. It brings the blush to many a more favored follower of the great Teacher; nay, any of us might stoop to learn something from that humble, faithful heart. Since becoming a widow, her conduct has been without reproach; a large family of young and helpless children was her legacy, and these she has supported with very little help. Instead of seeing her untidy hair tumbled and scorched by the sun, it is smooth and cleanly; her face, once so stupid, wears always a happy smile; her manner, once so awkward and hesitating, as though ashamed of her own presence, is now cordial and cheery. Though living at a great distance from the church, her place is never vacant, save only from sickness; her honest face we seldom miss from the Lord's Table. "He that hath mercy on them shall lead them; even by the springs of water shall he guide them."

The woman Eliza and her mother, of whom I have several times spoken above, have both passed from earth. I was not with either of them in the hour of death. Eliza sent for me, but I was unable to leave my home. I learned from our assistant minister, who visited her frequently in that last illness, that he had no doubt she had put her trust in the wonderful blood of which the prophet spoke, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow."

Her mother I have been more or less with during the whole five years. I had noticed a gradual change in her, less hardness, more anxiety about her soul, a desire to be taught. The name of Jesus had for a long time a pleasant sound for her dull ears, but the best evidence of a change in her, was the deep interest she showed in work for the souls of her children, and a charity for the fallen.

How, oh, how would these benighted, wretched ones have felt the influence of the Spirit of Truth,—where would they have heard the story of the Cross, had it not been for

this seeking after the lost? They never thought of going to church, and had they gone, and in the providence of God had any impression been made, it might have died for want of deepness of soil or for want of watering and care, for they both needed tender sympathy and sharp reproof, untiring patience and long-suffering. I have often so dreaded my visit to these repulsive people, that to strengthen my resolution, deepen my interest, and increase my zeal, I have said over and over again, as I went along, "For Christ's sake I go." And now they have passed from earth, gone to the grave where there is neither device nor knowledge. I remember the woman who but touched the hem of his garment, and her to whom He said, "Go, and sin no more." Calvary's bloody scene incites me to go out into the alleys and lanes and compel just such to come in. Yes, "Go out," is the Master's bidding, not wait and beckon from a distance to such as these so stupefied by long indulgence in sin.

The woman who was brought to a decision through the remarks of Mr. —— upon the conversion of the jail-keeper, has been one of our most exemplary Christians, and both her husband and daughter have followed her example. Two sons have joined our Bible-classes; one has broken away from a crowd of bad boys, praying earnestly for a year, but not yet having made an open profession of faith. Though never a drunkard, yet he was on the way to it, for three out of his crowd of boys are fast going down to ruin.

How easily these people are reached, and then how ready to receive our sympathy!—hands stretched out to us, tearful eyes looking up to us, neglected hearts wanting only the knowledge of redeeming love *brought* to them. I cannot call the work labor; we should say, our "Lines are cast in pleasant places, yea, we have a goodly heritage." We should not be compelled to urge Christians to put their

shoulder to the wheel in this work, for if they knew the delight of it, they would come and join in the harvest, for surely we have an earnest of a vast gathering.

HELPERS IN CHRIST JESUS.

THE great Apostle to the Gentiles specially commended holy women as his "helpers in Christ Jesus," and he also testified that all the Churches of the Gentiles united with him in giving one of them thanks.

The early disciples prayed the Lord of the harvest to send forth more laborers; and through the Holy Spirit's influence many women were raised up from their then degraded position, and became most effective aids to the Apostles in teaching the ignorant, and in watching over weak and wayward disciples.

One of the noblest bishops of our Church testified that cultivated women had been employed by him in a hospital as Christian teachers, and that they had evinced such skill and persistency, and such a constant reference to the spiritual edification of all sorts and conditions of men, that it filled him with hope. He further said, "I have seen godless men and reckless youth who had withstood all others, yielding to the silent and persevering efforts of ladies, and demonstrating how much can be done among the most forlorn of our people through their agency. It is teaching us more and more the necessity of individualizing our appeals, of making them with all kindness and constancy, and of coupling them with fervent and believing prayer." Readers of Holy Writ may have ceased to wonder that the eloquent Apollos was willing to be instructed by Priscilla, but it seems somewhat startling to hear one of our wisest bishops

proclaim that women were not only teaching him how to interest and instruct the ignorant, but that through their success he was filled with hope that even the wayside hearer might be saved.

All who have the spirit of Christ are moved thereby to communicate the glad tidings of salvation to others less favored than themselves. To such the following paper will be suggestive. It was written for private perusal more than two years since; and subsequent experience corroborates its statements and testifies to the inestimable value of individualizing our appeals and making them kindly, constantly, and prayerfully. These ladies do not reside in the hospital; they are mere visitors, who are not charged with nursing, or with any other duties than such as appertain to the office of a faithful Bible-class teacher in a parish church. Although the ill and dying patients derive unspeakable comfort from their Christian ministrations, yet the most convincing evidence of God's blessing on the religious instruction given by them is afforded in the after-life of persons who entered the hospital in a prayerless, and even a godless state. It should be borne in mind that most of the patients are in no more fear of death than they were when in the highest health, as they only require slight medical or surgical aid.

In such an institution, as well as in adult Bible-classes, temporal relief can rarely be administered by the Christian teacher without tending to self-deceit or hypocrisy in the sordid, or prejudicing the more noble against religious instruction through fear of being charged with base motives. There are exceptional cases, where peculiar hardships render relief necessary; but even there, great caution is required to prevent envyings on the part of those who have become morbid through disease. All appetites are apt to grow with what they feed upon, the body demanding continuous, and even increased, luxuries from those who are supposed

to be able to give them; and the soul, when it is properly nourished, craving an increase of spiritual knowledge. A woman with a sprightly mind and ready sympathy can almost invariably open the avenues to religious instruction without the aid of temporal relief; and where the heart is touched by the Holy Spirit, the learner is sufficiently cordial in welcoming the teacher. If every parish minister would induce some of the Christian women in his parish to give parts of two or more days in each week to such work, under the guidance of experienced and successful teachers, his hands would be greatly strengthened. Two of the closing letters should encourage young and inexperienced Christians to begin such a work, and the last letter displays such admirable tact that all may learn from it how to approach and benefit these "hitherto unapproachable beings."

W.

My dear Mr.——: You want from me a little sketch of my present hospital work, as distinctive from that in a military hospital.

Having had my heart engrossed and time absorbed for sixteen months in labors for the spiritual and temporal welfare of the soldiers, which had more interested me than any work for Christ and the Church that had ever come within my reach, I was cast down and perplexed when the soldiers were withdrawn from the hospital, and it was decided to receive into it that class of patients for whom it was built.

When it was proposed that ladies should remain as residents, or become visitors, I instinctively drew back, preferring so much the work among the soldiers. This feeling was the more strengthened by friends who thought time and labor might be much better bestowed elsewhere than upon the neglected class of poor taken from the lanes and alleys of our city. After a great struggle and much prayer, as no

one else was found, it was decided that I should enter for three months, and test the field thus offered. After a year of happy service in daily visitations at the hospital, with devout thankfulness I can say that I do not regret my decision.

With a feeling of distrust and despondency, the men's ward was entered that April day. There were twenty-five lying sick and helpless, with faces and attitudes bespeaking weariness and gloom. No convalescents, gay and cheerful, such as had varied the scene a few weeks before in that same ward; no uniformed soldiers sending a thrill of patriotism through one's breast, but dull, commonplace, suffering humanity. There was nothing to vary the life or divert the thoughts.

There was an early service in the morning by the chaplain, and the visits of the physicians twice a day; other than this, none were in the wards but nurses and patients for five days in the week. It looked dull as a prison.

Then came the perplexity, "How shall I approach these invalids?" Heretofore in the hospital, the one introduction had been, "In what engagement were you wounded?" or, "In what army did you contract your disease?" And then the one subject of our country and our country's cause had been common and very fruitful ground.

The ward for women was, if possible, more cheerless still; there were twenty of them sick, silent, and unoccupied.

The first week was a week of trial; but it was soon found that there beat in every breast the same throbbing human heart, open to sympathy and kindness, responding most marvelously to look or word of loving interest. Very soon were my sympathies enlisted in the sorrows and hopes of these representatives of Christ upon earth. There was a readiness of access which amazed me,—an opening for religious counsel and religious instruction fully equal to that exhib-

ited in military hospitals. I found, too, what I had never before realized, how much our working people and poor are neglected in the ministrations of the sanctuary.

There are daily in our wards, and in attendance at the dispensary, scores of men and women, living in our midst, who *never* had the gospel presented for their *individual* acceptance. In many cases we have English people who have lived in this country for years without attending public worship, though carefully brought up at home in the English Church. They are like sheep without a shepherd, and I can truly say, "No man has cared for their souls."

There were, during the summer, two ladies in daily charge of the hospital, and one who attended one day in the week. They gave the patients ready sympathy and interest in things temporal and spiritual, read to them, explaining and applying to individuals what was read, and praying with them at their bedsides. In many cases the request was made, "Oh, read to *me* every day if you can make time!" One would say, "I have not heard so much good since I lost my mother;" another would beg for "a little more talk,—it does me so much good and gives me something to think about."

In the course of the summer one man and three women died in the full hope of a blessed immortality through Christ Jesus our Lord, thanking God for having brought them to an institution where they had been awakened to their need of a Saviour, or warmed to greater love to Him, and invoking blessings on those who had given time and means for the erection and support of a church hospital.

Late in the summer the number of patients increased; sailors were added, who gave new life and variety to the ward. They come rough, but generous; unused to the forms of social life, yet never uncivil, gazing in wonderment at ladies moving about, asking the older resident patients, "What these women came for?" "Were they

paid for their services?" "Were they stockholders in the building?" etc. Soon the wonder subsides, and the ladies are regarded as "friends who bring sunshine with them," as has often been said. Sailors are proverbially very impressible; but the readiness to read such books as are selected for them, and to enter into close religious conversation, is a daily source of surprise to us.

The average stay of the patients is some three or four weeks; this time is very precious, and must be made as available as possible for the presentation of Christ crucified to those perishing sinners. At once the acquaintance is made, some clue found to the past life or future hopes, some insight into character or condition is gained, and usually at this first interview some religious teaching is gently dropped, some text of Scripture presented for consideration till next day, some hold gained upon the attention, if not on the heart, of the new-comer. And so the work goes on from day to day, each case followed up by such teaching and influences as it seems peculiarly to demand.

Some months ago a men's Bible-class was opened, which has been daily taught since; the attendance fluctuates, owing to the changes in the physical condition of the patients; but it is a gratifying fact that the record of each day's attendance includes nearly every man able to walk to the Bible-class room.

The visitors pray by the bedsides of patients, and opportunities for private conversation with one and another are *found* or *made* in the Bible-class room, where the subject of personal religion is affectionately and urgently presented. This is followed by prayer, that almost always melts the heart of the patient, and draws it out to receive, through the Holy Spirit's aid, the love of a crucified Saviour. Often after such prayer gratitude is expressed for the interest shown, and promises are made that God's

Holy Spirit shall be continually sought in earnest prayer, and efforts made to lead a new life by his grace and help.

Some persons have expressed the idea that this work was too inquisitorial, that the feelings of those addressed must be wounded or annoyed by our probing into their hearts and lives. The reply we make is that no rebuff has *ever* been given, no annoyance expressed by look or word; on the contrary, it often seems a positive relief to these people to unburden themselves to one who appears to understand and to sympathize with them. They realize that no idle curiosity, no impertinent spirit, actuates those who give their time and efforts to the cause of Christ.

Great tact is needed in this work; earnestly must the divine help be invoked in each individual case; great watchfulness and care are required at each step.

This brings me to the "helpers." Late in November an appeal was made for the services of more ladies, in response to which eight or ten offered service for one day in the week. There are great disadvantages in this plan, and it is hoped more frequent service may be rendered by some of them in the future; yet a vast deal of good has been accomplished, not only to the patients, but to the visitors themselves, in accordance with the promise, "He that watereth shall be watered again." Almost all these ladies were young, having had Sunday-school experience in teaching and visiting, but being quite inexperienced in dealing individually with adults about their eternal interests. I think I may say that, without exception, they at first declined praying with the patients, some saying they thought that was the chaplain's business, others shrinking from it through timidity or self-distrust. Most of these ladies wished to have selected for them the precise tract or Scripture portion to be read to each patient, disclaiming all power of discovering for themselves the tone, or character-

istic, or need of each individual. With practice and experience this distrust has passed away, and it is surprising to see the efficiency and earnestness with which some of these ladies are applying themselves to the work, individualizing remarkably those with whom they have to deal, and varying the mode of approach and the instruction wisely and well. Though their visits are made but once a week, yet the influence in many cases has been most marked, and the day of such visitor is noted and wished for by those who have been especially interested in her presentation of religious truth.

The laborers in this vineyard feel *themselves* blessed in their efforts for others. Two of them have said in the last few weeks that this has been the happiest winter of their lives, because they have had such an interest, as they never before felt, in trying to win souls to Christ. I append three letters, two of them from our youngest lady visitors, who will speak for themselves of the spiritual advantages they have derived.

"My dear ——: I regret so much being obliged to miss even one day at the hospital, for I never enjoyed any work in my life so much as that in which we are now engaged. It is something so different from anything I have before known, so much to work upon, and so much good resulting from what is done. It has often surprised me to see the willingness with which the patients receive religious instruction, and the very marked change which takes place in them while in the hospital.

"When I first commenced visiting there, it was with the greatest difficulty that I could speak to any one upon religious subjects; but the kindness with which all I said was received, and the increasing interest I felt in the work, soon made what was before a task a pleasure. While speaking to others of the love of Christ, my own heart

warms to Him, and I feel thankful that He has allowed me to labor in such a field.

"I have noticed that the more closely the subject of religion is presented to each man individually, the greater is the influence exerted, and the more marked the change which takes place in his character. In approaching the men I have never been repulsed, if I may except the seeming indifference of poor W., nor have they shown unwillingness to enter into conversation; on the contrary, they frequently express pleasure at the interest taken in them. It is a glorious work, and the only drawback to me is in myself, for I feel how incompetent I am to do my *duty* there, and while I have so great a desire to be useful, I am the means of doing so very little.

"It must be delightful to feel, as you surely must, that you are the *means* of doing so much good; and I pray most earnestly that God's greatest blessing may rest upon you, and that your reward may be an increased encouragement in your work.

"Another cause of encouragement is the interest the people in the neighborhood seem to take in their connection with the hospital. Until lately I have always very much disliked visiting from house to house; but now I really enjoy it, resulting from the pleasant and hearty manner in which I have always been received. They enter very freely into conversation, and seem pleased with the attention of the call, and I have rarely left a house without an invitation to repeat the visit."

"My dear ——: In justice to you and to myself, I want to thank you for letting me help you in the hospital work, and giving me the (before unknown) joy of trying to point perishing souls to Christ. It was an entirely new experience to me. Before I went to the hospital, beyond a few feeble attempts among my Sunday-scholars, I knew

nothing of speaking to any one upon the subject of personal religion. Nor did I realize, when I first promised to go, what the work really was; I had a vague idea that we were to read to, and entertain, the patients. When I found that this was not all, but that something more was intended, I cannot tell how I shrank from it, or how hard it was to say the first word of a personal character. It was easy to comment upon our reading, but to *apply* it was the difficulty. But when, by God's grace, and with help from you, I did break the ice, the difficulties seemed to vanish; and, moreover, the very act of so doing has so warmed up my own cold heart, that it has made my Sunday-school teaching a different thing. In regard to my religious experience, this has been the happiest winter of my life. In fact, I do not see how any one can attempt to deal with perishing souls in regard to their spiritual state without being driven to the Source of all strength, and made to feel their own utter inability to do anything of themselves; and we know, that the more we are at the mercy-seat, the greater will be our happiness. And then, too, how it sends us to the Bible! We feel that we must be able to give an answer for the reason of the hope that is in us, and be ready to reply to any cavils or objections. This work at the hospital has also been the means of driving me to the foot of the Cross with my precious burden, for we cannot do the work in our own strength, and therefore we must be incessantly at the mercy-seat in prayer.

"Another thing I have learned this winter,—how ready the careless and indifferent are to listen to the gospel message, and to listen, too, with respect and interest. Of all to whom I have spoken this winter, only one seemed averse to the subject, and that was W., with whom you have had similar experience, I think. This fact has made a great impression on me, for I had always thought that there would be, by many, a turning away from the subject, espe-

cially when presented to them by a woman; but, on the contrary, there has been almost an eager interest on the part of some to whom I have spoken, and sometimes I have been deeply humbled when I have come to them,—feeling myself cold and lifeless, and conscious that I could not speak from the *heart* of the love of Christ, by finding that they were not only ready, but anxiously listening to every word I said. Those were times when I was humbled to the dust, and driven to the Fountain opened for sin, with a consciousness that I could never face those men again without *feeling from the heart* all that my lips tried to utter. From a full heart I can bless the hospital for all that it has done for me. It has made me see myself as I never did before, and sent me, as a helpless sinner, right humbly to One who is mighty to save.

"Have you not noticed, lately, an increasing and very general seriousness, particularly in the men's ward? There has always been a readiness to hear, but lately I have noticed a seriousness and ripeness for the gospel. I have no doubt your Bible-class has done much to wake up this spirit, and that it has been prospered and strengthened by the daily ward services. I cannot help feeling that God has been sending us a special blessing lately. May we be found faithful in carrying the blessed truth as it is in Jesus to perishing souls!"

"My dear ——: I have promised a reply to your oft-repeated question, 'How do you *begin* the subject of religion with the patients in the hospital?' It is a very difficult question to answer satisfactorily to myself, for, as you say, 'there can be no set way applicable to all men.'

"Suppose you follow me in an imaginary visitation of the ward. You must be invisible, for in nine cases out of ten it is wiser to approach alone, on the subject of religion, one of whose case you know nothing. Here is a new face;

let us stop, inquire how long he has been ill, is he comfortable, etc., showing an interest in his physical well-being. 'Are you well enough to read?' 'Oh, yes, if I get what I like.' 'What do you like?' He will intimate what class of books he prefers. If such are not in the library, get the nearest to them in kind, and, after talking of them for awhile, say, 'Here is a book more interesting to me than any of those, and one I never tire of'—the Bible of course. This will soon give the key to his condition, moral and spiritual.

"Pass on,—another stranger. 'I have just supplied your neighbor with a book, will you have one?' 'I don't care much for one to-day; I have been reading till I am tired.' 'Ah, I see upon your table a tract I think very impressive,—John Bolton's First Prayer.' 'Yes, it is quite interesting.' 'I hope you have made *your* first prayer long ago?' The answers to such questions will be diverse. If the acknowledgment be made that no prayer has been offered since those made at a mother's knee, this opens a wide door, and an effectual one, to whatever you may wish to say on the duty, privilege, and necessity of prayer.

"Again. Here is an Englishman. 'How long has he been in this country?' etc. Perhaps he is not well enough to read. 'Would he like to have some one read to him?' 'Oh, yes, he is never tired of that.' 'Well, here is the touching little "Story of Lucknow."' 'Is it about the Indian rebellion? he would like *anything* about that.' I have read this hundreds of times,—never without emotion, and never without eliciting interest and attention. It forms an admirable introduction to what you may wish to say of a personal interest in a living Saviour.

"Once more. Lay this little book on the next table. It is a tract called 'The Invitation.' The patient takes it up and asks, 'Is this for me?' 'Yes, I give you the invitation and hope you will say Yes.' Perhaps I read a page,

then leave it and say that I will call for my answer to-morrow, and I try never to forget to keep these appointments.

"Here is one who looks soured and disappointed, as if the world had dealt hardly with him. Shall we have a welcome here? We must not be hasty. Remember that, in in all cases, we must not give *pity* but *sympathy*. We must not *seem* to let ourselves down to the level of those whom we would serve, but make them realize that we feel *with* them as well as *for* them. This poor fellow looks lonely, desolate. We will sit down by him and remark, 'It *is* hard to be sick among strangers; we hope he will soon feel at home; we want to do all we can to cheer and comfort him; he must consider us his friends while he is there; has he a mother at home? would he like a letter written to her?' etc. If not at *this* interview, assuredly at the next, if we are kind and exercise a little womanly tact, the heart will be unburdened of some of its sorrows, and opportunity given to point to Him who was the man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, who alone can bind up our wounds and heal our infirmities.

"Here is one who has been knocking about the world, away from home and domestic influences, for years. Let us interest ourselves in his journeyings and voyages. When he is warmed up by the interest we have shown in him, perhaps we ask if his heart does not turn sometimes with longing to his home and his mother? if he is not weary of this roving, restless life? We speak to him of the welcome which awaits him at home, and soon you can tell him the beautiful parable of the prodigal son, and show how *he* has perhaps wandered farther from his heavenly Father's home than from his mother's fireside.

"In most of the cases which we have imagined, occasion would be found to read some passages of Scripture, and *always* it is very desirable to press upon those we have been

talking to the *interesting* nature of God's Word, as well as its value and importance. The narratives of Scripture have a charm, you know, even to those not appreciating the saving truths they inclose; and the promise is, 'My word shall not return to me void.'

"I might go on thus imagining cases such as are occurring in my every-day experience, but these will suffice. I am glad to know that you feel with me that it is wonderful to see the readiness with which the roughest of our patients receive religious counsel and instruction. Surely we should be diligent in availing ourselves of such opportunities, and earnest in praying for the constant help of God's Holy Spirit, giving us a mouth and wisdom to meet each case as it presents itself. We need to have our own hearts more and more warmed with the love of Christ, so shall we best be able to commend Him to others. We must feel our own weakness and insufficiency, so shall we be led humbly to Him who has promised to be our strength, and through whom we can do all things.

"In our work, and especially in opening the subject with a stranger, we need to pray for a right judgment as well as for an earnest, loving spirit.

"*This blessed work is rarely if ever carried on to a successful completion until we have prayed repeatedly, in private, with each person whom we are trying to lead to Christ.*

"Ready access may be gained, almost without exception, to every heart. Some chord of sympathy is ever ready to vibrate, if touched lovingly and gently. To act efficiently upon the conscience and heart of the patients, I am more and more satisfied is to be done by grappling individually with each case. While I would not undervalue Scripture reading or tract reading to several persons at a time, as sometimes giving a *preparation* of heart for closer religious teaching, yet I have not found an instance in my two years and three months' experience where a sinner has *thus* been

led to the Saviour, or even to inquire eagerly of the things pertaining to salvation, unless such public readings have been followed by affectionate, close, individual efforts."

RESULTS AND METHODS.

"On the 30th of August, 1860, two mothers went, by invitation, to the house of a third, to meet a friend who desired to be useful to them, and thus commenced our mothers' meeting. Of those three mothers, two are present here to-night, the third is gradually but surely drawing near to her heavenly home. After a few weeks the place of meeting was changed to one of the smaller rooms in the basement of the church, and on the 3d of January, 1861, we were obliged, by the increase of our members, to move into this room.

"The names of five hundred and fifty mothers have been registered in our roll-book. Of these, one hundred and fifty-nine have removed from this neighhorhood, twenty-nine have, from various causes, given up their connection with us, and twenty-four have died. The present number on the roll is three hundred and thirty-eight.

"In October, 1860, we commenced a clothing-club, the object of which is to give the mothers the opportunity of depositing, from week to week, small sums of money for which they receive an equivalent in dry-goods and ready-made garments, shoes, and, in some instances, fuel. The sums thus deposited have reached a total of four thousand five hundred dollars, in addition to which, seven thousand five hundred and eighty-nine dollars and eighty-seven cents have been paid into the hands of the Principal of the committee for investment or safe-keeping.

"Important as it is for our mothers to acquire habits of frugality and economy, and by a little self-denial and care in the present, to make provision for future needs, we consider this as but a small part of the results of our work. Of our five hundred and fifty mothers, one hundred and seventy-three have been added to the communion of this parish, and five or six have connected themselves with other churches. The committee consists of twelve ladies, who have made, during the six years, seventeen thousand visits. Of the influence of these visits it does not become us to speak, but if we had done nothing more than carry with us the kindly sympathizing heart, and utter words of counsel and cheer, our work would not have been in vain. The result will be known in eternity."

Truly extraordinary "results" are modestly testified to in the foregoing report, which was made at an anniversary of a mothers' meeting. Is it not startling that a new and inexpensive agency, in full accord with the principles of the Church, should, in one parish, within six years, have sought out five hundred and fifty mothers, drawn them to God's house, supervised their home duties, and been instrumental in bringing one hundred and seventy-three of them into full communion with the Church? Think of the effect of five thousand visits now paid annually by intelligent, prayerful ladies, who come fresh from their own home-cares, with ready sympathy and with still increasing efficiency through experience gained by these visits! At some houses they receive much more than they impart, for many of these hitherto-neglected mothers, although poor in this world, are now rich in faith and good works. Some of them learned to read and write at the weekly meeting, and others were there taught so intelligently and kindly, how to practice their duties as wives and mothers, that an unprecedentedly large number of husbands and older sons have by

their aid been gathered into Bible-classes and brought to Christ in his Church. Neither the rector of the parish nor his lay helpers had any previous experience in this work; indeed, there were few who had any faith in it, visitors were procured with much persuasion, and the good work was retarded by many experimental trials.

Mothers who seemed to be the farthest from God were first sought out, and although charity dictates such a course, yet a taint is thus given to the association that it costs much effort to remove. If a better class of women are first banded together, these will prove useful, in the way of imparting some knowledge of handicraft or home-duties to the less favored, and of affording them that religious companionship so needful to promote Christian stability.

That this better class can be drawn in, even through a seemingly closed door, is shown by the subjoined experience of a visitor. It is very encouraging to know that the case referred to by her is the only one yet found where there has been an open and persistent opposition to Christianity, and even in this case, no threat of insult to wife or lady visitor has ever been fulfilled.

The second case reported, shows how the visitor can be useful to children, and the third illustrates the interminable extension of this work, reaching even to outcasts from society. To some, these details will be uninstructive, while to the sensitive, timid woman they are of inestimable value, enabling her to see how she can become "a good steward of the manifold grace of God." W.

Dear Sir,—As you think our experience will be useful to others, I will, at your instance, extract from my record the case of a woman of uncommon refinement; and then tell how children are benefited by the visitor; and lastly, show how this agency may be extended even to the outcast.

Nothing affords me so much pleasure as to mark the im-

provement of these people, in all their ways, when constantly visited, to note their reverence for holy things and love to God, their charity for each other, and their constant attendance upon the services of the Church. How might our beautiful Zion become "a praise in the earth" were we all earnestly engaged in gathering in these untutored ones, for they indeed often become ornaments of grace, and give evidence of true piety in heart and life.

My Edith, as I am accustomed to call Mrs. D., is an unusual example of purity and loveliness. She is by nature gentle, delicate in feelings, tender, with a clear appreciation of right, and but little tendency to wrong. But with all this, up to the period at which she began to attend our "mothers' meeting," she had little knowledge of God's ways with man, no clear idea of the gospel, no habit of prayer. Previous to her marriage she had gone sometimes to our church, more often to the Methodist meeting. She married a man as unlike herself as could be. He is blasphemous, coarse, cordially hating churches and all who go to them. For a long time he forbade Christians entering his house. So bitter is he (I must tell these things to show what "my Edith" has to encounter) that on one occasion he told our assistant minister to leave the house and never come there again. He declared to his wife that if our Principal came there he would insult her; and on another occasion, when I was making my monthly visit to his wife, he was in the back-room, and, calling her, bade her tell me to go, and when he wanted me he would send for me. To give you a better idea of this dear Christian woman, I must first relate some of our conversations in her own sweet language.

On my first visit, as is my custom if I know nothing of the people, I talked about her family, her mother, her early life; about things occurring in the town, etc. I became to deeply interested in her that I made four or five visits

during the month, each time becoming more attached to her. On one occasion (the third visit, I think), I said, rather abruptly, "Edith, I wonder you have never been a Christian!" I was forcibly struck with the idea that one so lovely, gentle, and kind had never prayed, never thought much about heavenly things, and yet it was even so. She laughed in her quiet way, saying, "I've never thought much about it. Once, before I was married, during one of the religious excitements in the town, I did for a little time think I should like to know something about these things; and I read my Bible a few times. After I was married I wanted my husband to go with me, but he would not, so I forgot all about it. No one has ever said anything to me upon the subject until now." I asked, "How do you spend Sunday?" "At home in the morning; walking about in the afternoon." "Edith, has it never occurred to you that this is wrong? for Sunday is not yours." "No, I have never thought that; but still I have had strange longings after something to make me happy,—something to fill up my heart, I suppose I mean." "Dear Edith, that is God's whispering to your unsatisfied soul, which absolutely needs the help of the Holy Spirit to lead you to Christ." Her reply was, "How can I become a Christian, if that is what I want?" I said, "Let me tell you first how God has manifested his love for you." And then I told her that "sweet story of old,"—the anguish of the Son of God in the deep shades of Gethsemane; how He saw of the travail of his soul and was satisfied; how He says, "Come and believe and be saved." I shall never forget that sweet face as she listened. At last she said, in a trembling voice, "Oh, I love Him now!—how can I help it?" Neither of us could speak again for a moment. Then I put my arm around her neck, kissed her pure brow, and said, "Shall we kneel down and ask our heavenly Father for all you still need? Already you have

his Spirit, and we can thank Him for that." Hand-in-hand we knelt and poured our full hearts out to the Father who heareth in secret. In no hour of my life have I known purer happiness than when Edith cast herself at the foot of the Cross. There was no struggling in that soul; single-minded, she heard, she believed, she loved. I felt that day, and have thought many times since, that God would soon transplant her into his heavenly garden. As she grew in knowledge of her Redeemer, she seemed to be too pure for earth. But God's ways are not as our ways, for she is still with us, and none would like to give her up.

On one occasion, when her husband had been more than usually ill-tempered about her going to any place of worship, she said to me, "Oh, I sometimes think I cannot bear it, and then I think of Jesus, of his patience, how long he bore with me, how many years I might have loved Him and did not, and this humbles me and helps me to try and pray and to do my duty. I often think my poor husband has a soul, and I must set him a good example. When I get down-hearted about the future, the long years, perhaps, that I must go on this way with no freedom, I rejoice in the hope of that time when I shall be where nothing shall hinder good." I talked to her of the early gospel-days, when the blood of the apostles and martyrs was the seed of the Church. She said this thought made her burden light indeed.

Another day—her heart overflowing with tenderness to her Redeemer—she said, "Oh, Mrs. ——, to think that He is every one's Saviour! I have been reading the book you gave me, *The Cross-Bearer.* I don't think I should like my cross to be otherwise than as God wills; but it is often very heavy. Perhaps I do not cast my burden upon Him aright."

Oh, how I do love this pure-minded woman! Love,

faith, gentleness, peace, are hers; days and weeks and months are alike.

Poor Edith suffered night and day, longing to take the Christian name; for as yet she had not made a public confession of faith. It was confirmation season soon after the Spirit's work was manifested in her. I was ill and unable to visit her. Our Principal came to tell me she had advised Edith not to come forward to confirmation this year, if it angered her husband—to wait: perhaps by so doing she might win him. Our minister, upon having the case stated to him, decided for her to wait. So a year passed away. She was often much tried, and several times was forbidden to enter the church. A little while she submitted even to this, praying earnestly for her husband. I continued to see her at hours when her husband would be away, and occasionally at my own house, and we would unite in prayer. At last one day she came to me and said, "What shall I do? I fear I am not doing right. Christ tells us to *forsake all.* My husband tells me I must *leave him* if I join the Church." I said, "Well, Edith, how far would you go for Christ?" "That is what I do not know; I want you to put it before me. What do *you* think?" My reply was, "I take the gospel as it is given; Christ says, 'If a man forsake not father and mother for my sake, he is not worthy of me.' You know what is before you; could you brave the consequences, remembering, too, that you have a child, which your husband would, no doubt, try to keep?" Tears rolled down her cheeks. It seemed cruel to probe so deeply, but I wanted to find out the strength of her love for Christ. "I think I must meet it," she said; "indeed, I do. I can only pray that my husband will not be so hard as he talks." "Well, Edith, we must be guided by prayer in this. It seems to me it must be God's desire that you should take this step; but a wife and mother must tread cautiously. We must be 'wise as

serpents and harmless as doves,' as Jesus tells us." I did not see her again until the day preceding confirmation, and then only for a few moments. She put her arms around me, and said, "I have decided! I must do it! Pray for me! I dread the evening,—dread to tell my husband that it is done!" "Trust, dearest Edith, that God will bless you." Her husband, before she left home, raved terribly, but she was safe in the Everlasting Arms. "Thou shalt hide them in the secret of Thy presence from the pride of man: Thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues." "Fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings." When she returned home, as she afterward told me, she could hardly believe her husband could be so quiet. This calm continued until several things occurred to sour him, and then upon his wife he vented his bitter feelings and words in condemnation of Christianity. Always when I meet him he deliberately turns his back upon me. Once in a great while only, Edith can be with us for a little time at the meeting of mothers; but she is rarely absent from church or the Holy Communion. During these years she has suffered great afflictions; but she has in these, as in other things, exemplified the saying, "Thou shalt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee," for not a murmur has escaped her lips, not an impatient look; she thinks it all for good. Tenderly she still speaks of the past, the first of our acquaintance, how she then learned to love the Saviour. "How often," she said, "do I think of words you have spoken to me, of the little books you have given me, from which I have learned many things! I always think of you at the mothers' meeting, wondering how you all are. My husband does not change; but I know how good God is, and I keep thinking that some time He will soften his heart." She reminds me of these words of Isaiah, "The work of righteousness shall be

peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance foreve '

This shows how the gospel can be *carried* to the wife of the respectable mechanic, as well as to the outcast. Why should this seem strange to us? Does not the book of precious promises say, "Blessed are ye that sow beside all waters"? Oh, that we had more faith, less infirmity of the flesh, filling us with fear and trembling, making us forget so often the words of our Master, "For it is not ye that speak, but the spirit of your Father which speaketh in you"!

In one of my visits to our good Mrs. F. J., I found her unusually depressed. She is often sad, for she has very much to try her. I think few are called to pass through so many daily and hourly vexatious cares as this woman. On this particular day she seemed gloomy, as though heart and hand were both weary in the conflict, and must be supported by friends and animated by some human voice. Providentially I struck the key-note of her sorrow by simply asking after her eldest child. With trembling, and, perhaps, with some impatience and harshness in voice and manner, she said, "I will call her; I want you to see her." The child came, and the mother directed her to stand before me, while she told me how bad she was. I felt for a moment it was hard to know how to act, for I must be the *child's friend*, and yet not let her see her mother's indiscretion in thus harshly laying bare her faults to a stranger, whom I feared she might, under the circumstances, look upon as a judge rather than a loving guide, and thus make it very hard for me to benefit her. Her mother said, "She is indolent, unwilling to assist me; runs off and plays when I most need her." I pressed the mother's arm as a sign

not to say more, and called the child to me. She looked a little saucy and independent at first. Then occurred to my mind a little story I had once heard, called "Recollections of a Mother." I told her the story, and she listened very attentively, and when I came to the part which related the mother's death, her little face relaxed, and her lips trembled. I said, "Mary, your little heart is full of trouble, and you wish you could always be good, do you not?" She replied, "Yes, but I cannot." "Suppose I were here and took your hands and helped you very kindly every day to perform disagreeable duties, would you love me and be glad?" "Yes, I would." "Well, Mary, do you know that a kind Hand wants to help you every day, but all the time you have kept your eyes shut and have not seen it? It was the same hand that was laid on the heads of little children when that kind friend said, 'Suffer little children to come unto me.' Mary, who was that?" "It was Jesus Christ." "Now, dear Mary, I want you to open your eyes and see, and to open your ears and listen, and Jesus will bless you, and help you to do this work for your mother, and you will feel so happy. I want you to ask Him to walk with you, and to speak to you. He will do it, because He loves you and desires to make your heart better. Now we will kneel down and ask Him to be with you to-day, and to-morrow you must ask Him yourself, before you come out of your room." So the mother and the child knelt with me whilst I prayed. She put her little hand in mine and laid her head upon my shoulder. I could almost hear her little heart beat while the conflict went on between flesh and spirit. I felt the tears drop upon my hand before we arose, and I knew the spirit had triumphed. I kissed the little red cheek, and at my bidding she ran joyfully off to the sewing her mother had given her to do. I knew, too, that the peace which passeth understanding could flow into the heart of the

child-Christian as well as into the full-grown man. The mother and I talked some time. I told her I disapproved of exposing a child's faults in its presence. I thought it well for friends to advise with each other about their children, or refer to one who they thought had more experience than themselves, but never in the presence of the child; that in nine cases out of ten a feeling of dislike would spring up in the child's breast against the friend called upon to listen to its failings. I thought she forgot how young the child was, and that we all as parents too often forget that we are only sowing the seed in our children's hearts, and *must wait* for the harvest; that our words and counsel cannot take root and bear fruit in a day. I used, to simplify my remarks, an illustration of my friend, Mr. ——: "What would you think of a farmer, who, having sowed his seed, should dig it up every day to see if it had taken root?" The woman is very quick, and saw directly what I meant, and smiling, thanked me heartily for my visit, and wished she could see me oftener.

In visiting a mother we become acquainted with members of her household. A husband or son, if faithfully visited, is often brought within the fold, and others still are reached by this influence, which widens, like the circles formed by disturbing still waters. Casually meeting their friends or relatives, we can say a word to them, which, if followed up, may become the means of changing the current of their lives. I will record one such case:

Poor Helen was a mere child when I first met her at her aunt's, and she was soon to be a mother. I shall never forget her looks. On this occasion from delicacy I did not address many of my remarks to her. In my prayer I did

not allude to Helen, except in a general way, governed by the same motive which forbade me talking with her. I intended, however, to visit them again sooner than was my wont, for the express purpose of knowing this poor child and winding myself around her young heart to catch her sympathy and draw her as a Magdalen to the feet of the Saviour. On my return home I made her a subject of earnest prayer, and this I did for many days. On my next visit to the family, almost the first thing that I heard was, "Helen says you prayed for everybody but her the other day, therefore she thinks she is too bad to be prayed for and you will let her go to hell." Poor child, how little she knew of what was going on in my mind respecting her! While there, I sat very close to her and read and talked of the Redeemer s agony in Gethsemane, and his blood shed upon Calvary, endeavoring to fill her mind with awe at the fearful state of sinners before such a loving God, since nothing could atone for their guilt but the life of the Holy One, even the Son of God. I wanted her to be thoroughly aroused so as to realize her transgression before I poured in the balm of Gilead. Not a syllable passed her lips. I refrained from asking any questions relative to herself or her condition; but as I left her I said, "Helen, I want to be your friend, if you will let me." I only made two or three more visits previous to the birth of her child. She was always silent, and I thought sullen; it seemed as if she could not easily be led to penitence. She was often treated by the family with a harshness that was calculated to make her more stubborn. At times she gave way to great violence of temper; on one occasion, when an aged relative sneered at her, she struck her a severe blow. I went to see her when her babe was five days old, and took the child in my arms. Poor girl! I should fail if I tried to describe that visit. The flood-gates of her heart were opened. Throwing her arms about my neck she sobbed, "You *do* love me

and will not cast me off; you *will* help me to be good!" I held her and soothed her; pointed her to the sinner's Friend; told her the kind, loving words of Jesus, and that Christ had only died because of love towards us, therefore in sorrow, not in anger, He beheld her; that she must look up to her Father in heaven and ask Him to forgive her for Jesus' sake; she must pray for the Holy Spirit to come into her heart, and He would guide her aright. I saw the tears stealing down her cheeks, and unfolding my arms from about her, I knelt down and offered a few words of prayer unto Him who is never deaf to the cry of penitence, knowing that He would not break the bruised reed. At every subsequent visit, I found her ready to be taught, but she dreaded the future which looked so terrible to her. One day she told me her sad story.

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Her babe lived but a few months. The following year Helen became a communicant of the Church. Four years have since rolled around, and she has not strayed from the fold. She comes to me for advice in everything. Temptations she has not escaped, but by God's grace she has thus far escaped from sin. Her past history exposes her to insult from both the thoughtless and the unprincipled of the other sex, and it has been hard for her to bear the contemptuous laugh and sneering remark of her fellow-workers.

Through this girl, my sympathy for the fallen has increased tenfold. If the hand of kindness and Christian forbearance had not been extended to her in the hour of her misery and degradation, it is more than probable she would have rushed into ruin to escape the taunts of injudicious friends. Weak and helpless, she would perhaps have made a few feeble struggles to tread the path of virtue, and then would have yielded to the strong temptations that beset her. My prayer is, that she may continue to ask grace to remain faithful unto the end. That this girl should have

come under our notice seemed to be entirely accidental. Guided by the unseen Hand to the home of a member of our mothers' meeting, she was brought under our influence and care. There are just such wandering sheep everywhere; and shall we whose souls are lighted with heavenly truth sit idle whilst our sisters are perishing at our doors? Shall we not pray that more of the favored ones of earth will use the precious gifts of *time* and *opportunity*, woman's heart and woman's sympathy, in leading the erring back into the paths of virtue?

So does the influence of our mothers' meeting extend from heart to heart and home to home. On all sides work opens, and there is far more to be done than there are hands and hearts ready to do it. Neither is it necessary that only mothers of families should do this work in our Church. Are there not also daughters, lovely and beloved, whose hearts are touched by the Holy Spirit? Ah, they need not vainly try to seek in fiction satisfying food for the heart! In yonder narrow street or lane they will find no imaginary objects of sympathy, but sad hearts, crushed spirits, perishing souls for whom our Saviour suffered. The daughter, under the guidance of her mother and pastor, could aid in this work: the simplest child can be a soul-gatherer, by giving the cup of cold water only. No especial knowledge is needed to labor for Christ, only a heart that has been touched by Him, and is thus prepared to be touched by the story of another's woe.

WELCOME MESSENGERS.

CONYBEARE thus renders St. Paul's quotation from Isaiah: "How beautiful are the feet of them that bear the glad tidings of peace, that bear the glad tidings of good things!"

This hopeful declaration of the poetic prophet, repeated by the zealous apostle who was honored with the only recorded visit of the ascended Saviour, has almost ceased to be believed. The chief part even of baptized people in Christian lands are estranged from the Church, because she believes in the communion of saints as an article of faith instead of exercising it as a practical principle, and also because she selects *one* of the many authorized modes of telling the glad tidings of a complete salvation; and thus restricts her teaching mainly to public and formal addresses from the pulpit and desk. The traveler who has consciously lost his way, will gladly welcome the most humble guide who manifests a willing, sympathizing spirit, although he may indignantly reject one who chides for heedlessness or claims the right to censure sharply.

St. Peter said to the sorcerer, "Thy heart is not right in the sight of God," "because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money." What would that apostle say to any modern church where the rich purchase their privileges with large sums of money, and give alms with a few obscure seats to the abject poor, whilst the great body of laboring people are passed by without observation? On this subject the Church Congress, held in England last October, gives evidence of a great spiritual awakening, by an earnest desire to return to primitive usages; and in this country some of the simple gospel modes have already been successfully tested, and holy women are again the foremost messengers of glad tidings, —bishops, parish ministers, and chaplains testifying to

their marvelous success with lads, men and women of the working-class, just where the Church has hitherto signally failed.

So many ministers and lay people are earnestly desiring to know how they can be delivered from blood-guiltiness, that some of the most successful workers have so far overmastered their strong desire to avoid observation, as to allow the publication of extracts from their private diaries.

The following papers tell of successful work in a field that had been abandoned as hopeless, because so few came to the public services of the Church. A large harvest was there reaped in a single season by a lady residing some miles from the field, she only giving one-fourth of each week-day, and most of Sunday, to the work, under the sanction of her bishop. Her power lies in the issues of her heart, and not of her purse; and the extract of a letter to her (printed at the end of this paper without altering a sentence or even a word), shows that the educated can thus be sought out and won to Christ as well as the unlettered. W.

My dear Sir,—The missionary work in our vicinity lies very near my heart, and sometimes makes me impatient at the smallness of our means,—I refer only to the *human* instruments we need, for I rejoice that we have not and need not the appliances of Dorcas and Aid Societies.

A mothers' meeting, now numbering sixty women, has been held weekly since September. There is no inducement whatever held out to these women, except the advantages of religious conversation with, and instruction from, their visitor, and the pleasure of social intercourse with each other in a cheerful room, well lighted and warmed. They bring their own work and sew all the evening. A tract of a narrative kind is usually read, interspersing the reading with remarks of a practical nature. As much con-

versation with individuals as can be had, is held by the visitor in the course of the evening. At the close, a portion of Scripture is read and explained occasionally by the chaplain, when he is present, usually by the lady in charge. After prayer and singing, the meeting is closed.

This part of our work gives great promise of usefulness, but more visitors are needed. Not a week passes without applications from some of these families, begging for visits from ladies, whose advice and sympathy they want in their troubles, cares, and perplexities. For pecuniary or material aid we are never asked; for such comfort and instruction as we are able to give, we have the daily blessings and prayers of these poor sisters of ours, who feel honored and benefited by the Christian attentions and suggestions of ladies superior to them in experience, position, and education.

Would that the city churches could spare more laborers from their overflow of communicants to come to this suburban field, and aid in reaping the abundant harvest! Sure it is, that the city parishes would be the gainers by thus making workers of some who are now folding their hands, because there *seems* nothing for them to do in connection with the parish church. Owing to your urgent solicitation, I give you the following extract from my very imperfect diary:

November 12th.—Visiting —— Street, with a view of "prospecting" the neighborhood, I knocked at the door of No. 220; it was partially opened by a woman, somewhat refined in appearance, who very curtly told me she had no children old enough for Sunday-school; that she went nowhere to church. She did not seem inclined to have me enter, and I was about to retire, when I thought a moment and said, "I would like to come in and talk to you a few moments." She said, with deep feeling, "I have a dying child in the next room." I went in and saw a

beautiful boy of fourteen months, whose life I thought was numbered by hours only. I spent an hour with her, talking to her of the sweet comforts which Jesus could give, and of his grace, to which she seemed a stranger. Before I left, I prayed earnestly for the child's recovery, if God willed it so, that he might be raised up to glorify his Father in heaven; also, pleading for the sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit upon the mother. She thanked me warmly; was much affected, and invited me to come again. A week passed and I was not well enough to go again, so I asked Mr. —— if he would call and see the mother. I thought the little one was most probably gathered home to the Saviour's arms. Mr. —— called, and sent me word that the child was recovering, Mrs. D—— attributing its recovery to my prayers. "The child from that time began to amend." She was intensely anxious to see me. Before I could go, another message of like import was brought to me, with the addition, that she intended to give the child to me. After this I visited her several times. I said, "Mrs. D——, if this child is mine, I give him to Christ." She was much affected, said her own baptism had been in infancy in the Church of England, but her preferences were all for the Baptist Church now; that she did not hold to infant baptism, but for the sake of having my interest and prayers for her child, she longed to have him baptized if I would consent to be his god-mother. She had always thought the theory of god-parents an excellent thing if carried out. All this was spontaneous, of course, on her part. I had many conversations with her on this subject; also on the matter of seeking for herself an interest in the great salvation. I prayed with her at each interview. Her husband, she told me, had once been a Lutheran, but for years before she knew him, he had given up all connection with any church. I left with her, more than once, an invitation for him to come to see me, and go with me to

my Bible-class, which I had just commenced at the house of a mechanic in the neighborhood.

December 31*st.*—I was told some one wanted me; found a respectable middle-aged man, who introduced himself to me as Mrs. D.'s husband, and thanked me for my interest in his family. I talked with him half an hour; urged upon him the renewed consecration of himself to the service of the Saviour: he was deeply moved. I told him I thought his wife was feeling an interest in her soul, and proposed to him that they should, that very night, pray together. I prayed with him, and we then walked up to Bible-class; after which he said, "I will begin the new year with prayer, as you wish." He was very attentive, and promised to come again. Two or three weeks after that, he told me his wife wanted to see me very especially; on Tuesday I went. She wanted to talk to me about her husband. She "*could not understand it,* his interest in the Bible-class, his attendance at church, his nightly Bible reading and prayer." She then told me that when she first gave him my invitation to come to class, he had flatly refused. The next Sunday she told him, if he did not attend, she thought *Miss E. would come over and see him at the machine-shop.* He said he would not have her come there for any money; he guessed he would have to go and see her *once.* After he left the door, he came back, saying he did not want to go and would not. From that day—December 31st, to this, June 21st—he had been absent but once from Bible-class and church, and then he was very sick.

Mrs. D. told me that her heart was wonderfully touched when he told her he had promised they should have prayer that night, and she had replied to him that she felt they *must* begin a new life, and this would be the first step towards it.

January 15*th.*—I paid a visit to Mrs. D., who was very much awakened on the great subject; mourned that her

heart was so cold. She had been an enthusiast in the temperance cause, and cannot be satisfied that she earnestly desires to be a Christian until she feels the same thrill of excitement about religion that she had about temperance. She had prayed for more faith, more love, more *reality in seeking*. I urged upon her the simple and immediate acceptance of a Saviour. He would bestow upon her all the graces she needed; if she mourned over her coldness, pray for more love to Christ; if she doubted her earnestness, pray for a deeper sense of sin, and of her need of a Saviour. She said that the superintendent of a Sunday-school, where she had taught for a short time before her marriage, six years ago, had called last week to see her. She told him how she had fretted and been unhappy about living in this part of the city, and had reproached her husband for having ever taken this house; but she now saw plainly the Lord had some design in it, and it was that some Christian friend should be sent to speak to them of a Saviour. After one of my visits in February, I find this note: Mrs. D. is more settled than when I last saw her; she thinks her love to Christ more real. Her great desire is to consecrate both her children in baptism; she is uncertain still as to its scriptural basis, but considers that such a pledge of consecration must have an influence on a child, if he is reminded of and trained to it. At first she wished the youngest baptized, because he belonged to me, and I would be his god-mother. Now she felt both children must be dedicated, and she is now praying for more grace to bring them up aright. I prayed with her that the act of consecration might be entire on her own part. A week after this, Mr. D. begged me to go home with him, if I could, his wife was so anxious to see me for some special reason. She met me at the door with beaming face, and asked me if I would go up-stairs, that she might see me alone. She then said, she hoped she had found a

Saviour and happiness; thanked God I had ever entered those doors. She told me of two faithful friends who she knew had been long praying for her; acknowledged that she had been striving for weeks against conviction of sin, "but that is all over now, and I consecrate myself to the service of Christ from this time forth." I said, "You intend, then, to confess Him before men?" "Yes, as soon as may be." "Will you go to the Baptist church?" She looked surprised, and said, "I think I ought to join the church in which I mean to have my children baptized." I was delighted to have this *suggested* by herself; told her to think it over prayerfully, and ask for guidance. She spoke of her husband, and longed to see him ready for such a step; never had seen him as he was now, so interested and serious; he enjoyed the Bible-class so much; he wished it would last another hour. I rejoiced her heart by telling her of my conversation with him on the way over; his expressed hope that "this was the beginning of a new life with him; it was a new era, indeed." With joyful hearts we united in prayer and praise. For some weeks after I visited Mrs. D., her husband came to church alone. He was ignorant of our service, and I was attentive to find his places and direct his use of the Prayer-Book. When he became familiar with it, I told him I expected him to do the same friendly office for others, which he now does. The first Sunday Mrs. D. came to church she was completely overcome; had not been in a place of worship for years. Now it is her study through the week to manage everything, so that she can be regularly at mothers' meeting and church, making everything give way to this. On March 27th Mr. and Mrs. D. were confirmed; and a week after their little ones were brought into the fold of Christ by baptism. They continue to grow in grace, as is evidenced by the following letter received recently from Mrs. D.:

My dear Friend,—I cannot express the pleasure your cheering letter gave me, and yet you will think I have been tardy in answering; but from the date of this you will perceive I am away from home, hence the delay in my getting it.

I am visiting some relatives of my husband's, who, by the way, are members of the Episcopal Church at ——. They are very kind, and do everything to make my stay agreeable. Another thing that has added considerably to my pleasure is the meeting with a very dear and valued friend of my young days, who is now pastor of another church here. You may judge how delightful our intercourse has been, and what precious experiences we have had to tell each other, when I tell you we had not seen each other for ten years, when I was spending Christmas at his father's house, and *then* he was a wild, thoughtless youth, and I just as giddy a girl, *and we were both skeptics.* I heard him preach yesterday, for the first time, and I think my heart was never so thrilled. We have thought and talked so much about you: ay, and prayed for you, too, that you might be restored to us in renewed vigor and strength, to go on in your grand, glorious work of winning souls to Jesus. I think sometimes when my husband is praying that his voice grows more earnest—certainly more eloquent—when asking a Father's protection and blessing on the dearly-loved friend who was the means of bringing us to the only state of true happiness on earth. God bless you for what you have made him!—he was always a good husband, but, oh! he is infinitely dearer and more precious now, and you are blessed, you will be blessed. Do you know, I often think in spite of the arduous labors you perform for the good of others, what a happy life yours must be; how much more real pleasure you enjoy than those who spend their lives *seeking enjoyment for self;* how woefully are they deceived; and then when I think how *many*

there are who, like ourselves, never lay their heads on their pillows without invoking a blessing on you, their benefactor. Oh, is there not enough in the true Christian's life, even in this world, to doubly pay him for all it costs, let alone the world to come! It seems to me if this principle was preached, and better understood, the cause of Christ would gain more converts, and the Church be more flourishing than it is. I dislike the theory that this world is a vale of tears, *full* of misery and woe. It is not. It is a beautiful, *beautiful* world to me, and *man is a glorious being*, only the blighting influences of sin mar either one or the other. True, there are pains and troubles; and yet do not these very things call forth all the beautiful sympathies and charities of our nature? Methinks as the cuttings and chiselings of the sculptor's knife "lead forth beauty from the marble block," so do the sharp pains and troubles we endure call forth all that is truly lovely, all that is divine in us mortals.

You ask "what am I doing for Christ?" I must tell you the truth, painful though it is to me: *nothing at all*, only loving Him more and more every day I live. You are saying, "this is not right." I know it, deeply do I feel it; but in what way shall I begin? Sometimes I say, if I had *your* time and *your* talents; and yet, when thinking on this subject, I have felt my soul expand and glow under the influence of the Spirit, until it seemed my whole being would gush forth in one song of melody to the Most High, and I have *felt* God had given me *some talents* that might be made of use in his service if I only knew how. Will you help me to pray that He will in his own wisdom give me some work in his vineyard, that I be not *always* a "cumberer of the ground"?

Mrs. D.'s prayer was soon answered, as is shown by the following report of her first visitation to persons designated by the Principal of the mothers' meeting. Although her husband is a mechanic, yet to aid in supporting two aged

relatives, Mrs. D. sews for customers, and is obliged to go out to work two days in each week. Reader, consider that this woman was one year since living in irreligion, and now is rising before day to get a few hours each week to convey the glad tidings to others less favored than herself. Have you an equal dread of cumbering the ground? The zeal of such women should be an effectual rebuke to self-excusers, who always say there must be ladies of remarkable intelligence, wealth, and leisure, to make mothers' meetings successful.

Saturday, November —. I called on Mrs. Abells and was received *very coldly;* talked awhile and succeeded in awakening a *little* interest. She finally promised to come to mothers' meeting, and wishes to know something about having her children baptized. I called again for her and brought her to the meeting. Next went over to Mrs. Allen's; found her very ill, suffering terribly from a tumor. She is evidently in the last stage of consumption, and besides has dropsy. Although enduring almost mortal agony, she spoke rejoicingly of the preciousness of a Saviour's love, and expressed a most confident hope of a blessed and glorious immortality. The only thing that seemed to trouble her was, the thought of leaving her four little ones (the youngest only twenty months old) to brave the hard knocks of a cold world without a mother's tender care. It was good for me to be there. I inwardly prayed for Divine aid to enable me to give her some consolation, and I believe it was given me. I read to her portions of the fourth and fifth chapters of second Corinthians, and then knelt down and poured forth my soul in the most earnest prayer I ever made in any one's presence save God's. On rising she seized my hand, and, with tears streaming over her face, blessed me for the comfort I had given her. I told you of their poor condition temporally. On Sunday I took her the medicine, and almost as soon as I came in

the room she requested me to pray. I did so, and again she expressed the comfort it was to her. Monday she was freer from pain than she had been for a long while; the result, as she thought, of the medicine I took her. I also went to Mrs. Stephens's. She promised to come to mothers' meeting,—seemed pleased to have me call, and said she would try to induce Thomas to come with her. I next visited Lucy Lawton; she was not at home,—saw the wife of her father's brother, a very interesting, and, I believe, well-inclined young woman. She expressed a great desire to come to church and meeting, but said she would not be able to get to the latter till eight o'clock. I wish you would go there. There is a work to be accomplished with those men which *only you* are equal for. Altogether, I felt much strengthened and encouraged in this, my *first* missionary labor. That it may bring forth *some* fruit is the prayer of Yours, in the love of Christ.

June, 1866. In March I met Mrs. N—— in the street; she had been three times to the mothers' meeting, and was now on her way to ask me to call and see, and pray with a sick neighbor (Mrs. P——) whom I had never seen. I went with her, and before I left the house had an opportunity of speaking some earnest words to the husband of Mrs. P——, who, I found, was very godless and intemperate. He listened with respectful attention, and thanked me for what I had said. I regret to say I have never again seen him, though I visited his wife often during the four weeks of her life. When we left the house, Mrs. N—— said, "I wish you could see my husband and talk that way to him." I said, "I have never seen him: do tell me about him; is he a drinking man?" "Yes, by spells; but for three or four months he has not taken anything, and he is getting very particular about the children going to your Sunday-school; he reads their books every week. It was only yes-

terday he said, 'Hannah was bothering so about a Testament to study her lesson out of, he supposed he would have to get her one.'" "Is there none in the house?" "Yes, we used to have a Bible, but my husband lost it in the army." By this time we had nearly reached her house. With some embarrassment, she said, "I hope you won't think it queer in me, but I think if you go by yourself it will take more effect on him." I preferred this, so we parted; I to knock at the door, with a prayer for guidance and help, while she slipped into the house of a neighbor, very nervous, I afterwards heard, lest he should "say something offensive to me, he was so passionate;" she added, "Miss S—— might as well try to run her head through a stone wall as to get anything from my husband." Ignorant of her fears, I went in, asked Hannah if her father was at home, and sent her to tell him I wanted to see him. Quite surprised, he came down, shoemaker's apron on and boot in hand, which he was making. I said I had known his children for some time, now wanted to get acquainted with the parents,—had not much opportunity of seeing the father. He did not ask me to sit down, scarcely answered me, looked puzzled to know what was coming. I asked if he had ever been over to our little chapel. No, he did not bother much about such places; it was, in fact, years since he had been in a place of worship. Very sorry to hear this; I wished he would come over with his children. I hoped he found them the better for Sunday-school. Yes, that was one thing he would say, and he did not like to have them stay away. Well, I had begun a Bible-class for the fathers. I knew they had not much time for the study of God's word, and for a few weeks I had met with a few of them on Sunday at ten in the morning,—would be very glad to have him come next Sunday. He did not care for such things. "Have you ever attended such a class?" I asked. I urged him very much to come *just once*. I would not put

him down as a member. At last he said, "Well, I will promise to come some of these days—*once*." I said, playfully, "It is not my custom when a lady asks me to come and see her on a certain day to say I will come some other day; maybe she won't want me then." He said, in an amused way, "Then you mean you only want me for next Sunday?" I said, "That is just so." It was settled he should come. Punctually he was in his place, and seemed deeply interested in the lesson. When it was over, I said, "I believe Hannah has no Testament to learn her lesson from; take this to her." "No, I am going to buy her one." But he did consent to take it, promising to read a chapter every day. I hoped he would finish the good day by coming to church in the afternoon. "I do not think you will see me there, but if nothing happens I will come to the class next Sunday."

In the afternoon, near the close of the service, I saw N—— in the last pew of the church. I changed my seat several times, finding places in the Prayer-Book for strangers (as is my custom in our little chapel), and managed to seat myself near N——, to whom I spoke words of welcome at the close of the service. He had been pleased, and said he might come over occasionally.

It is now eleven weeks since his first attendance, and he has never been absent from class or church service. I think he is decidedly under the influence of God's Holy Spirit, though, as yet, there is no evidence of his having given his heart to his Saviour. He is diligently studying his Bible, having not only bought a Testament for Hannah but a Bible for himself. He reads a chapter to his wife every night before they go to bed,—has taught his children a little prayer for night and morning. Three weeks after he began to come to church, he bought his wife, one Saturday night, a new dress, a hat for the youngest child, and some other articles of dress, telling her he wanted her to

go to church regularly with him; if she would agree, he would carry the baby himself to and from church. She opposed it, saying, "She did not care to go bothering with all the children." However, he carried the day, and for some weeks the whole family, baby and all, have been regularly at church, the attendance only interrupted by sickness. A few weeks ago Mrs. N—— came to me with beaming face, saying, "Oh, what a change in our house! On Whitsunday N—— proposed taking us all on an excursion" (the first time he has asked her to go along with him anywhere for seven years). "We all spent the day at——. He is altogether a different man. I used to be afraid to hear him coming home, even if he was sober, he was so cross to me and the children." One of the neighbors said, "The change in that house is wonderful to us all; if you can only get an influence with one or two others of the same sort in this row, you will be doing a good work."

July —. N—— tells me he is very desirous of connecting himself with the Christian Church; but I am disposed to postpone it, that his steadfastness may be tested, fearing much the injury which might be done to the cause if he makes a profession of faith in Christ without being thoroughly changed; the eyes of all in the neighborhood are upon him, some ready to cavil, some, alas! who would not grieve to see him fall. I did not, of course, express this to him, but suggested he would consider himself then and there consecrated to the service of his Redeemer, and by watchfulness and prayer strive to lead, by God's grace, a Christian life, awaiting the next Episcopal visitation to confess publicly the faith of Christ crucified. He rested thus, but wished to have his children in covenant relation to God; so the four were brought to baptism, and I believe he felt deeply the vows, not only in the name of the children God had given him, but as binding himself to be a faithful soldier and servant of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Sept. —. N—— is more and more interested in divine things; is waiting patiently for confirmation; attends every service we have, our preparation service previous to the communion included. He tells me he hopes soon to bring others to the class,—has tried to influence some.

Oct. 10*th*. I was much shocked to-day in a visit to one of our sick Sunday-school scholars (Fanny V——), to find her father and mother both under the effect of drink. I had long regarded them as hopeless, but scarcely expected such degradation as this. The little girl, ten years old, was very ill; she had, the night before, pleaded with them not to drink any more while she was sick. I told them her life was in great danger, and, under God, was in their hands; implored them, by every consideration I could bring to bear upon them, to desist at least as long as she was ill; and at last they pledged themselves, in the most solemn manner, to avoid all stimulants for the time I named. Mrs. N—— had asked me to go there, and, with the other neighbors, was attentive to the sick girl, who recovered in a few days.

Oct. 15*th*. Much surprised to see Mrs. N—— enter the mothers' meeting, introducing Mrs. V——, the woman referred to above, whom I had often invited in vain. She seemed interested, and said I might put her name down as a member. A fortnight ago we began, at nine o'clock, a morning service, appointing this hour to suit the convenience of "my mothers," who can thus attend the service, and be home in time to prepare the mid-day meal. It is but an experiment as yet; but on both Sundays Stonewall Nelson, as I call him, and his wife and four children were punctually in their places before service began; and last Sunday, to my astonishment, they brought with them Mr. V——. I could scarcely believe my own eyes; my surprise was only equaled by N——'s satisfaction. After church they both came to the Bible-class,

and N—— said to me, "I brought V—— this morning, but you will have to get him to come this afternoon." I expressed my gratification at this beginning of what I prayed might be a new life, and urged him to come with N—— again; and so he did. It was, indeed, a cause of gratitude when I saw him, clothed and in his right mind, seated in the house of God with little Fanny, wondering and happy, beside him. I have placed him especially under charge of N——. May he, by divine grace, be enabled to exercise an influence over him which shall reach to eternity!

My dear Mrs. S——: Do you remember giving me, some five months ago, the name of S—— as one who would probably present himself as a member of my Bible-class? I want to thank you for doing so, for his case is full of encouragement to all who are laboring in the Lord.

By the providence of God, he was led one day into a store kept by Mrs. O——, where, after making his purchases, he remained awhile, waiting for a car. She entered into conversation with him, asked what church he attended, etc.; found he went nowhere. She spoke of the importance of public worship, ending with some earnest words on his best and highest interests. Regretting she had neglected to invite him to your Bible-class, she wrote him a note to do so, and next Sunday he walked five miles to attend it. You spoke to him after the teaching was over, and recommended him to become a member of my class, which was within half a mile of his lodging.

He did not come the next Sunday, and I surprised him by a visit one evening, after his working hours were over. I cordially invited him to my class, and spoke of the Friend of sinners. He thanked me for my interest, and promised I should see him next Sunday; but he did not come. I wrote him a note, and again went to see him. He was very much touched at these expressions of interest from a

stranger, and on the next Sunday, he was a most attentive listener to the truth as it is in Jesus. I had an hour's conversation with him after class. He was much impressed by the leadings of Providence, which had taken him, just at this crisis of his life, to Mrs. O——, whose words of religious truth were the first addressed to him personally in his two years' residence in America. He had been a member of the Presbyterian Church, in an English village, where he knew every one, and was surrounded by helps and restraints, religious and social; he came here, was disappointed in his expectations of immediate success in a very good trade, had but few acquaintances, and they were scattered in this great city, but "had not yet met, as far as he knew, a single religious working man." He had been shocked at the state of things about him at first, and had "tried for awhile to stem the torrent, but he had given up long ago, and was drifting to perdition." He told me how unhappy he was, and that he had recently tried to drown thought in the intoxicating bowl; that he had determined to throw himself away as fast as he could. We prayed together, and with tears streaming from his eyes, he asked me, "If I would be to him a religious friend and help;—it *might* be, God would once more receive him." I believe the Good Shepherd *has* found the lost sheep.

G—— has moved some distance from us, but is rarely absent on Sundays. He has grown in grace, and in the knowledge of the Lord, I think, week by week. He often remains for private conversation and prayer. He will soon again unite himself with the visible Church of Christ.

He married very young, and left a wife and two children at home, hoping when he came to America, that he could soon send for them. Failing for the first year in everything he undertook, he became involved in debt, and latterly when he had good work, he had fallen into bad company and spent all he made in riotous living. Now his energies

are bent on making and saving money, that he may repair the injuries done to his young family by his neglect, and that he may soon enjoy again the sweets of domestic happiness.

He has placed the first instalment in my hands, feeling so happy that a beginning is thus made. "He is afraid to trust himself with it, he is so weak, but thanks God there is some one to encourage him."

I think we cannot estimate the dangers and temptations besetting the paths of such young men,—strangers in our city. They have no places of innocent amusement where they can spend their evenings; no friendly hand is stretched out to them socially, as would be done in a village. They are too wearied with the day's labor to sit down and read, even if their taste so inclined them. What are they to do? Is not this a great problem for some of our Christian men to work out? It is much on my heart and in my thoughts. If every Christian man and woman stood on the alert as Mrs. O—— did on that day she spoke to G——, how many would find such a day—a "turning-point" in their lives, as G—— always calls it!

SEEKING AND COMPELLING.

"THE Son of man is come to *seek* and to save that which was lost," and surely the Church, his bride, will bring very little honor on her Lord and Master until she seeks men everywhere, and proffers salvation for their individual acceptance as tenderly as it was offered to Zaccheus.

"Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city," and "go out into the highways and hedges, and *compel*

them to come in, that my house may be filled." It is plain that this positive command should be universally and constantly obeyed, yet it is equally obvious that the Christian Church is neither diligently seeking the lost nor compelling the indifferent to come in, although she claims to be the duly commissioned and organized army of Christ. In dictionaries the term "obsolete" is affixed to words not in use; but the Church will hardly consent so to describe the words "seek" and "compel," although they have for a long season been practically obsolete.

The Apostles were enjoined to become fishers of men, but they did not understand their Master as directing them merely to spread stationary nets and to trust in special divine interposition in their behalf; no, they successfully *sought* men, and *compelled* them to come in by the constraining power of divine love. The Church is diligently dragging a net, but it is in shallow water where minnows swim; and it is lamentably true that, owing to inappropriate treatment, a very large proportion of these little ones break the meshes and escape before they are full grown. How can the Church be awakened to the alarming fact that the lads and men of the most numerous classes are still increasing in profanity, intemperance, and alienation from the Church, although infant baptism has been practiced for more than eighteen hundred years, and the Sunday-school system has been in active operation for half a century?

"The children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light;" therefore, with the politician, seeking and compelling are not likely to become obsolete terms, no political party being content to rest in the divine authority of a republic, or in their interpretation of the Constitution. Christians, by their supineness in the Church and by their activity in politics, are either practically admitting the superior importance of the ballot-

box, or trusting that in spiritual things God has dispensed with human instrumentalities.

Increasingly earnest prayers are going up from anxious and broken-hearted wives and mothers for their profane and intemperate husbands and sons; therefore God has stirred up some of the "Deborahs" to plan and execute a series of successful flank movements, by which the houses of working people were opened, and hundreds of lads, of men, and of women, who were living either in moral indifference to religion or in open sin, have been brought into mothers' meetings or Bible-classes, and through these divine agencies into full communion with Christ in his Church. This movement has not been confined to any special locality, or any particular nationality; but it has demonstrated the most hopeful fact that the gentle, prayerful love-knock opens both the door and heart of our working people to those who unobtrusively seek their spiritual welfare.

So large a proportion of those thus approached have been induced to cast in their lot with God's people, that the Church may put on her beautiful garments whenever she can stir up all intelligent Christians to manifest even a small portion of the zeal and perseverance that politicians are invariably displaying.

Chrysostom thus interprets Hebrews x. 24: "Let us consider the example one of another that we may be provoked to zeal and good works;" and surely the following record of prayerful, persistent zeal on the part of a delicate woman, who is also engaged in other Christian work and burdened with household cares, should incite others to zeal and similar good works. This lady did not give heed to the criminal suggestion that the Church should wait until moral influences are exerted by legal enactments or by philanthropic action; for she believes in the omnipotence of Christ's love when it is brought to bear directly

on the individual heart. Surely if the prevalence and increase of flagrant, open sin does not stir up the Church to "seek and compel," genteel morality will be much less likely to influence its action, or to prepare sinners to realize their need of the great salvation.

Of the twenty-five young men who are reported by their teacher as having become communicants, most of them had to pass through a fiery ordeal in breaking away from their boon companions; and several of them were further hindered by the intemperance and profanity of their fathers.

W.

Dear Sir,—Four years ago I became interested in the working-class of young men. My lot being cast in a manufacturing town, I had every opportunity for seeing, without the trouble of seeking, how much these youths were forgotten and neglected by the Church. Our Sunday-school was full, numbering hundreds, from the lisping child up to that age when boys imagine they are men. Some effort had been made by a few faithful teachers to hold the lads, and one lady had succeeded in interesting several who had strayed from the school by inviting them to her house in company with her Sunday-school class of boys. Two gentlemen had a small number in their Bible-classes; but, one of these having entered the army, his scholars soon scattered. A few accompanied him to the field, and the others joined the crowds that feed upon husks, and waste their strength in the path of evil.

Illness had compelled me to give up a class of girls I had been teaching, and with returning strength my thoughts turned constantly to the young men I passed at every corner, at every engine-house, and at every tavern. I thought if my Saviour and theirs was here in the flesh, He would in some way call these from their haunts of pleasure and of sin to listen to Him while He taught them the way of life.

It was "the *poor* who had the gospel preached unto them," and the *multitude* that He fed with loaves and fishes. "I came to seek and save the lost," were the words of our Master, and they who hold the lamp of life in their hands, like the priest of old, pass by on the other side. To these poor sons of toil my heart went out, and I could not but feel that, though they are hard and rough, we should not withhold from them the voice of kindness and sympathy, nor the controlling influence of cultivation and refinement. But what was to be done for them? I spoke to one who I thought would guide and lend me counsel. He replied to my earnest appeal, "They have the Church; they know where to hear the gospel; they are within sound of the bell; they *need* not be neglected." I turned to another, whose whole life is given to the work of extending the Church. By him I was induced to procure the names and residences of a few to visit, and persuade them to meet me on a Sunday, and thus form a Bible-class.

Upon this plan I commenced. I made a few visits and obtained from five very rough fellows (judging from outside appearances) the promise to meet me on the following Sunday. One assured me I would have my hands full, and that I would soon be glad to get rid of them; he also told me he drank, swore, fought, spent many evenings in low taverns, went to dances, and occupied his leisure hours in summer robbing the neighboring places of fruit, etc. His friend (whom we met in the street) looked full of mischief, and, in a droll manner, told me I might "count" upon him. Because of its strangeness I found it exceedingly hard to speak with them; following them to their homes in my endeavors to win their confidence and esteem, I scarcely knew what to say to them. But He who has promised light and guidance in answer to prayer, took me step by step that day, and directed my feeble efforts in commencing and organizing a work I felt sure should be done.

Sunday came, and true to their promise they met me; one in his pea-jacket, with neither collar nor necktie, as though he would convince me that the character he had drawn of himself was true. I met them with great timidity, and think I should almost have failed and drawn back had it not been for the support extended me by the superintendent, who came into the room and welcomed the boys, made a few remarks, and so quieted the nervous excitement under which I labored. I looked at the unstable elements before me, and knew they must be dealt with carefully.

I determined to avoid anything like a regular Bible-lesson to commence with, because I feared that were I to make it tiresome, or "pious," as they laughingly called solemn teaching, perhaps my first Sunday would be my last with them. I therefore took my chair away from the table (they had collected in a distant corner) and sat down just before them and talked pleasantly, drawing them on to remark upon the lives of sailors,—a subject I thought would be likely to interest such fellows. I then told them a story called "Stand by the Ship," which gave the history of a sailor who had been faithful at his post amidst all the dangers attending that life; faithful to his officers, and faithful to good principles early taught him. I applied it to our newly-formed class, and asked them, like that boy, to stand by *their* ship. They were very quiet, attentive, and evidently interested, and one remarked, on leaving, "that he thought they had had quite a good time, and he guessed he'd try it again."

As one week passed away to give place to another, I found it anything but joyful to work for these boys. It was a corner in the Lord's vineyard which required no ordinary tilling; hard and stony ground, soil which must be turned over many times before the seed would take root. The warmest of the sun's rays, with the early and latter rain, would be required to make it spring up and bear fruit.

Some Sundays they would come from drinking-houses more than half-intoxicated, requiring considerable firmness, with kindness, to control them. I am aware many would say that in such a state the Bible-class was no place for them; and so I often felt, yet I hid their faults and misdemeanors from every eye. I desired to see the power of truth in just such hearts, the influence of the Spirit in such lives, and every day I became more and more interested in them. Their uncouth appearance and bad habits were in a measure lost to my sight in the one ever-present thought and earnest desire to do them good,—to be the means, with God's blessing, of leading them to the Saviour. The first year was hard work. Even to this day I look back to it as a dark, troublous time, through which I should dread again to pass. Every Sunday I went to my class in fear and trembling, lest my boys should have done something to turn the voice of the Church against them. But few felt any interest in them, or sympathized with me in my anxiety about them. They were denounced by members of the Church as a nuisance, and many would have aided in shutting them up in the station-house. I neither listened to nor noticed the opinions of any, but worked on, one week encouraged, the next thoroughly disheartened.

On one occasion I found my class-room almost deserted (the number then attending being fifteen) because a teacher had ordered them away for talking and laughing near his class-room, telling them "the street was the best place for such as they." I had hard work to get them back. One fellow, who had been softened more by my influence over him than the rest, remarked, "If we are only fit for the street and to go to the devil, why, let us go." I plead with them, and at last, with tears and entreaties, prevailed upon them to return. It was sorrow upon sorrow to think of losing them after having gone through so much for them. I had then had them under my care some months, had

gained their confidence and affection, and the Holy Spirit had begun his great work in the souls of seven or eight. Some had cast themselves at the feet of Jesus; others were struggling against the tide of evil which rolled in upon them with almost resistless force. It seemed to me impossible for them to do otherwise than go headlong down to destruction. What was to prevent them? When I regarded their few opportunities, their wretched home-training, their fearful surroundings in the street (their only place for recreation, and a place where the devil met them at every step, both cloven-footed and clothed as an angel of light to attract and decoy), and when I saw Christians satisfied with building the temple, ringing the bell, and preaching from the pulpit to those who would come and listen, I was sure the devil was in advance of us, and had things pretty much his own way, placing a fearful responsibility upon the Church, and a great account to settle at the door of every individual Christian.

The untutored and uncultivated masses are not to be attracted by the eloquence of the pulpit, nor in this land of freedom where liberty has her full sway, are the young men to be forced into submission by mere authority.

The tenderer emotions of the human heart exist with these rough boys as well as with those of different positions and greater advantages. The gentler feelings in them are *not* dead, only sleeping; waiting to be aroused by some kind voice and sympathetic heart,—one which yearns for their good and prays for their salvation.

I had taught my class but six weeks when one of these boys, aged eighteen, one of the roughest, came to my house, anxious about his soul. Passionate, energetic, affectionate, but wayward and entirely undisciplined, he was filled with apprehension, yet touched by the thought of Christ's love for him. He said, "I cannot get that love out of my mind

when I see you, when I hear the church bell, or feel in my hands the Prayer-Book which you gave me. A troubled feeling comes over me. I prayed this afternoon and read something in a religious paper, and then determined to come to you and see what I should do." I was almost too much delighted to scrutinize the true nature of the impression that had been made upon him. The son of a drunkard, the lad was a blasphemer, drank considerably, and his moral tone had been lowered by reading immoral literature. Notwithstanding this knowledge, repulsive as it was, I thought of nothing but what was to be done to turn him from the error of his ways. I knelt with him to ask our Father, who giveth liberally and upbraideth not, to give him power to resist temptation and sin, to lead him to the fountain which cleanseth even from *crimson* sins. He promised, with trembling lips, to keep away from places of temptation.

Being inexperienced, I was sanguine about the result, and felt assured he was on the road to the truth as it is in Jesus. Very soon I learned from sad experience that such promises and good intentions very, very often come to nothing. Not very long after this boy had appeared so deeply impressed, I found him in the street one evening—*drunk*, in company with one or two others. I forgot everything in my anxiety for that soul so lately breathed upon by the Divine Spirit. I took his arm, saying, "I am alone; come home with me." He scarce knew me. I held him firmly, and in decided tone told him who I was, and almost compelled him to go with me. Seeing another boy whom I knew, I beckoned him to go with me: he took F.'s arm, and I walked the other side until we reached my home. I did not stop to consider what any one would think or say, or what to do with him. I only remembered that God had said to him, "Son, give me thy heart;" and that that poor, weak heart was a little while ago deeply

moved by a heavenly Father's love, and I must snatch him from the power of the Evil One.

Until three o'clock in the morning he lay in my house in a drunken sleep, my husband being willing to harbor him for my sake. I could not retire, but passed many times through the dimly-lighted passages to the room in which I had left him down-stairs, praying meantime in anguish of spirit for the rescue and salvation of this poor boy, whom I had learned to love like a child. I was standing by him when he awoke. He raised himself up, and in a few moments the truth flashed upon him. "Oh, my teacher! What have I done? what have you done for me? let me get away from your presence." I said, as firmly as I could speak, "Stay where you are; think of your mother; you must remain here until morning." With an expression of sorrow and agony such as I shall never forget, he cried, "Oh, pray for me!" And in the silence of the night we knelt and prayed to Him who told us of the Father's love for the prodigal son. If tears and deep emotion be a true evidence of penitence, F—— surely manifested it then.

At break of day I called a servant to give him a cup of coffee; and exacting a promise that he would return that evening, I let him go to his work. I feared to leave him to the influence of the street in his troubled state of mind, for I had seen enough of his impulsive nature to know he would be tempted to break away from my control from very shame. I devoted an hour to him in the evening, endeavoring to build him up in moral and spiritual strength, and entreating him to cast himself at once upon the Saviour. He was much moved, and when he left I gave him a book to read, which I thought would interest and divert his mind for a time.

Weeks passed on, and I think intense must have been the interest both of angels of light and of darkness, as they noticed the mighty struggle which went on in the soul of

this tempted boy ;—one day sinning, the next repentant ; one day praying, the next plunged into gross wickedness. Such was his history day after day and week after week. I wish I had kept a record of the number of times I have visited this boy, or followed him to the door of the ale-house ; gone into his work-shop ; come upon him on his walk from work ; gone to his home ; met him at the Bible-class-room, and induced him to call at my house. I think it would number hundreds. Frequently he would be angry, —would beg of me to let him alone ; threaten to go away to be rid of religious teaching. But I knew God was striving with him ; I saw too plainly that deep was calling unto deep in his soul. I wrote him at least once a week, sometimes oftener, and to many of my letters he replied. In one he said, "I wonder God does not cut me off. I cry like David, 'All thy waves and thy billows roll over me.'" Had I not reason to believe the Holy Spirit was with my boy, notwithstanding his fearful plunges into sin, when he could thus enter into David's spiritual anguish ? Whilst the Spirit strove and Jesus stood at the door and knocked, I could not but entreat him to open his heart, that He who was "the way, the truth, and the life" might come in and abide with him.

For several years F—— had been fearfully profane ; his "crowd" said he uttered an oath with every sentence. I find this habit, when confirmed, the most difficult to overcome. I always tell them I would rather see them drunk than hear them blaspheme. They do not realize the direct insult they thus offer to their Maker ; they begin so early to break this law, long before they can drink or gamble, that the habit becomes strong. I gave this boy once a little blank book in which he was to mark down every time he swore, and show it to me at the end of the week. Sometimes the number would be so great he would stop marking and be ashamed to let me see it. I felt that it would be a

help to him, for I knew that every means must be used to aid him to overcome his evil habits, and I think it was of some benefit to him.

My class was a few months old when confirmation season commenced. The rector had spoken earnestly to his people and informed us that in six weeks our beloved bishop would be with us. I made every effort to have my boys attend the confirmation-class and hear all that was said upon the subject. I wrote to each and sent to them such of Ryle's tracts as I thought would have some influence upon their minds. I took two or more aside each Sunday after teaching, and talked to them of Jesus' dying love, of their state before God, and by this personal ministration I gained a powerful influence over each soul, learned to know the wants of each, the weak and strong traits of their characters, when and how most easily tempted, and what there was in each to build upon. I learned early in my work, and time and experience only confirm this opinion, that the lesson and the general teaching is little without the close personal application of the truth to each individual soul. I have many, many times known these fellows to be leaving the class in a hard, cold, careless manner, and as they shook hands good-by, I have gently whispered, "Stay, I want to see you," and have seldom been refused. When all were gone, and we were alone with God, I have talked and prayed with them, and instead of hardness and indifference on leaving the room it would be with better desires, thoughtful countenances, and, many times, tearful eyes. Every such interview softened the fallow ground of their hearts and prepared it somewhat to receive again words of truth, for it is "line upon line, here a little there a little."

After the night-school which I had for them at my house on Monday evenings, I detained one or more for a private conversation. I taught them simply reading and writing at this school. After the lessons we sang a hymn and of-

fered a short prayer. The boys were always orderly, and some very anxious to improve; others I had much trouble in interesting, and only got them to attend by persuasion. The first five boys were double the care of the rest of the class, as they belonged to one of the roughest sets in our town; the others varied in grade, some being sons of most respectable mechanics. A few had the incalculable advantage of Christian mothers, and these were often vexed at the trouble the rough ones gave me, and would have had me dismiss them from the class. One boy particularly interested me; he had been brought up in the Sunday-school, having been under the care of his grandfather, who was a strict Episcopalian. He had never been baptized because his mother was a Baptist. When I first knew him he had returned to his father's, who is a drunkard, but he could not be happy in his mother's church, and obtained her permission to go to our Sunday-school. He came with some others to my Bible-class. There was a solidity about this boy which interested me. I do not mean by this that he was a good boy; on the contrary, he and his companions were a very wild set of fellows. In my letter to him at this confirmation season, I inclosed a tract, entitled "Whither Goest Thou?" and I took up the same idea in my letter. In his reply he said, "The words, 'Whither Goest Thou,' went straight through me; twice in my life my heart has inclined towards religion, but I gave it up. Your letter awakened me; I am a bad fellow, but no matter what I do in the day, I always say the Lord's Prayer at night, and I think this habit has kept me from much evil. I will think about what you desire me to examine into." A few nights after the receipt of this letter from C——, I met him at church, waiting after service to shake hands with me. Guided no doubt by the Unseen Spirit, I addressed a few words to him which were the means of changing his intentions, and perhaps influencing the current of

his future life. I said, "Charles, to-night may be the turning-point of your life. The pastor waits in his room to see all who are anxious about the condition of their souls." A stern, fixed expression settled upon his face, such as I have often seen upon it, when two ways were before him, pleasure or duty, and he determined courageously to choose the latter. In a quiet tone he said to me, "Could I see the rector *to-night?*" "Yes; go and tell him what you have told me, and may you decide to give your heart to God." He waited until eleven o'clock before it was his turn to see the rector, after which he returned home, where, as his mother afterwards told me, he sat silent and abstracted until almost twelve o'clock, when he retired. At that very hour, on that very night, he had promised to meet two wild fellows, with whom he intended running away from home and going to sea. But it was said of him, "Behold he prayeth." There was no mistaking his earnestness then, and we have not been disappointed in him. Nearly a year after this, he joined a regiment of cavalry, and served three years in defense of his country, not forgetting also to fight under the banner of the Cross. In his tent he has had as many as sixteen listening when he read the Bible. He never failed to check the men when swearing, and never omitted kneeling and committing himself to the care of Him who never slumbers nor sleeps. All who accompanied him, three of whom belong also to my class, yet speak of the good example he showed them in field and tent, even under most trying circumstances. All his letters breathed the same quiet, earnest spirit; one expression particularly I find in several of them,—"Pray for me that I may be faithful to my God and true to myself." He returned unharmed, and immediately sought my class, where, I am pleased to say, he may be found with each returning Sunday. The testimony of his friends will give you an idea of his faithfulness. "Mrs. ——: You need never have

C—— on your mind; he goes just as far as he knows is consistent, and *nobody* can take him farther. I have often seen him tried. When we want to do anything wrong, he just puts his foot down, and then we know there is no use to talk." In the case of this young man, I often think it was a most wonderful interposition of Providence and evidence of God's blessing upon my work. I never knew until long afterwards that the night of which I have spoken was indeed the turning-point in his life. I did not learn it from him, for he is not one to talk about himself. He is a great help to me in the class, for he has no ups or downs. Unflinching, immovable when sure he is right, I can refer to him as an example to the others, showing the power of Christ's love as exhibited in his daily life.

The subsequent history of F——, who caused me such intense anxiety, is full of interest and comfort. The trying hours I spent with him, his long struggle with the Evil One, would fill many pages. I therefore leave him for another letter.

My class has numbered forty-four. Of the five who first met me in that little room, one has gone to his last home: three days' illness, with scarce a conscious moment. I knelt beside him and watched his spirit take its flight. He had been taught to pray by his mother. The week of his death I had written to him, and inclosed the lines, "I lay my sins on Jesus." The first night of suffering he, half-unconsciously, spoke the name "Jesus." Who shall take from us who loved him the hope that, having been baptized in the name of the Holy Trinity, he had also been washed and made clean in the blood of the Lamb?

One other was deeply impressed for a time, but was held back from coming out on the Lord's side by difficulties at home; not having courage to give up all for his Saviour. He afterwards became quite careless and sinful, but continued from time to time to pray. A few months since he

too was called to go upon that journey from which no traveler returns. I was not with him, but he asked prayers of many and prayed himself. We remember the story of the dying thief. Two of the five are members of the visible church; the other remains the same, neither anxious nor indifferent. During the four years, twenty-two have joined the communion of the Church; two others joined the Methodists, and one the Baptist communion. Many have removed from the town, and of these, two are Sunday-school teachers in other States; five others are communing in their respective places of residence; others still have left the place who are not professors, some doing well; one or two, I fear, are very careless. I correspond with all who leave their homes, and often know more of them than their parents. One young man is preparing for the ministry of the Church.

You may ask, "Are all these faithful to the cause they have embraced?" Two, I fear, have looked back; some others are often inconsistent, but do not give up the habit of prayer. Many there are who adorn the doctrine of the Cross as burning and shining lights. Brands plucked from the burning, they have become pillars about our beautiful Zion.

ANTI-INCRUSTATOR.

It is lamentably apparent that, even in this favored land, the Christian Church, although free from all state alliances, is utilizing so little of her divine power that the chief part of the people are not only irreligious, but are increasing in their alienation from her ministrations.

When human or mechanical power is from any cause hindered from giving out its full force, the children of this

world ceaselessly labor until the cause is ascertained and a remedy applied. A recent example of this kind should quicken the Children of Light in their obvious duty, and encourage them to seek perseveringly for a remedy. There is a striking analogy between a steam-engine and the Christian Church. Caloric, the great mechanical power, when infused into water, concentrated in a boiler, and used in appropriate machinery, enables man to overcome difficulties hitherto insurmountable, and wellnigh to revolutionize the earth. Grace, the great spiritual power, when infused into man, concentrated in the Church, and used in its divinely arranged machinery, is God's engine for uprooting the kingdom of Satan and producing a moral and spiritual revolution in the world. As all the water used in making steam is more or less impure, incrustations are formed on the inner surface of the boiler, just over the fire, wasting much of the power of fuel; so in the Church, incrustations are formed from man's imperfections, hindering the utilization of divine power.

By a simple arrangement in the boiler, it is asserted by inventors that a little of the power of steam is so modified as to produce a magnetic or electric current, which, when directed to the surface on which the incrustation has been formed, gently and thoroughly removes it, and prevents its re-formation. This so-called "ANTI-INCRUSTATOR" is an important discovery, for it is claimed that it not only utilizes much valuable power, but also prevents explosions and injuries to the boiler caused by forcible attempts to remove incrustations. Efforts to remove Church incrustations by force, or to overcome these hinderances by intensifying public services, having proved alike injurious, the discovery of some magnetic or electric modification of humanized divine power is not only important to give a new impulse to the Church, but it is evidently essential to the fulfilment of her divine mission.

Church Congresses and Delegate Missionary Meetings are hopeful indications that the Spirit of God is stirring up the Children of Light to become wise in their generation, for at these meetings, magnetic or electric currents are induced by the contact of heart with heart, because exercised in the single purpose of extending Christ's Kingdom, without a caucus, an election, or any other act calculated to produce partisan alienation or strife.

It is further found that this magnetic, electric, or sympathetic modification of spiritual power inclines her ministers and members to restrain the *authoritative*, and to bring the *persuasive* power to bear on those classes that are most estranged from the Christian Church. Fortunately this modification and new direction of power receive the cordial approval of all types of Churchmen, because it is both spiritual and orderly, bringing the hitherto neglected ones to Christ and his Church, by visits to their homes, by Christian fellowship, by instruction suited to the capacity and condition of each individual, by prayer with them separately, and by socializing them in Bible-classes and in mothers' meetings. Although *men* seldom possess or cultivate this persuasive power, yet with *women* it is almost instinctive ; therefore it was well to inaugurate the work by inducing ladies of cultivation and good social position to undertake it under the sanction and direction of their ministers. The magnetic current of Christian, sympathizing love is heightened in its beneficial influence by their self-denying efforts to soften and elevate persons far below them in social position.

The Holy Spirit is abundantly blessing these labors of love, and when the clergy will ennoble this work by manifesting a high appreciation of it, and will perseveringly direct all *their* persuasive power towards each incrustated communicant, the Church will soon generate all the force needed to enable her to fulfil her mission to souls that are

now corrupting their way within sight of our consecrated buildings.

The following record is most encouraging, for a harder test of this modified power of the Church could not be demanded than the entrance of an entire stranger into a parish where there was neither a free service nor a single unrented sitting. The preparation of this paper was an act of great self-denial; it was obtained by urgent solicitation, under the belief that the spirit now moving in the Church would, through this narrative of real occurrences, stir up other rectors to inaugurate a similar movement, and enable them to draw out the latent persuasive power that modest Christian women are slow to proffer. W.

About a year ago, I was much surprised, one day, by the receipt of a note from a clergyman with whom I was very slightly acquainted, urging me to aid him in inaugurating missionary work in his parish.

After a momentary feeling of surprise, I almost dismissed the subject from my mind, for the parish was distant from my home, I was a total stranger in it, and I was, moreover, expecting soon to enter upon a different field.

But the "Divinity that shapes our ends" soon made it clear to me that the "call" to —— Church was from God, and I accepted it. I "went out, not knowing whither I went."

And now the question was, how and where to begin? The church is small, and every sitting in it was rented; no really poor people were connected with it. What, then, should be our base?

A sewing-school had been in successful operation for two winters, and I was invited to become its nominal directress, in order to make the acquaintance of the teachers, and through them of the children and their parents.

You may imagine, for I will not attempt to desc.ibe, the

feelings with which I found myself, one afternoon, in the rector's parlor, the centre of a company of twenty ladies (no one of whom I had ever seen or heard of before), and was introduced as one who was to begin among them a new order of things.

It was decided that I should at once enter upon a course of visiting in the district. In the first place, I accompanied each teacher in the sewing-school to see her scholars; next, I went the rounds with each lady teacher in the Sunday-school who had children of the working-people in her class; then I looked up all of that *caste* connected with the boys' school; and finally, accompanied by various ladies of the congregation, I canvassed the whole district, going from door to door in the courts, alleys, and small streets.

The field struck me as a promising one. The population of the district was made up of about one-half Germans, the other half Americans, most of them hard-working but thrifty people, above the degradation of pauperism. The Germans attended the Lutheran churches on Sunday mornings, and the lager-beer saloons on Sunday afternoons; the Americans seldom entered any place of worship. All admitted the reality and importance of religion, and seemed to feel ashamed of their neglect of it.

Everywhere we unfolded our programme,—a Bible-class for men, a mothers' meeting for women. But "what was a mothers' meeting?" They had never heard of such a thing. We painted it in glowing colors: "A social evening meeting of friends and neighbors, a break in the monotony of home, a rest from care and anxiety, and a blessed opportunity for hearing God's Word and for prayer, all without the publicity of the great congregation, and—not least of all—these privileges to be enjoyed in a calico dress, and with a baby, if need be, in the arms."

There were, of course, many excuses for not coming to

the mothers' meeting: the husband's supper to get, the children to be seen to, etc., though most of the women exclaimed, "Oh, how nice! That will be very pleasant! I will come!"

This cordiality, together with the general thrift and industry, so different from the pauperism of the Irish, cheered me very much, and made me draw many invidious comparisons between them and the Germans.

And now came the time for the fulfilment of these promises. Our first mothers' meeting was appointed for an evening towards the close of November. There were four German women present, three of whom were sisters, buxom, cheery women, who had evidently come for an entertainment, and could not give themselves up to our powers of fascination, because they were wondering all the while what was to come next. I am sure they expected some magic-lantern or other exhibition. Of course they went away disappointed, and never returned. The fourth individual was a poor, sorrowful widow, who could not understand ten words of English.

The next meeting was worse yet, and the next, and the next; up to the beginning of February there were never more than six women present, and one evening we had but one! My co-workers asked again and again if I intended to give up. Such a thought never entered my head. But it was evident that something must be done out of the ordinary routine. These people knew nothing of the Church, felt no interest in religion, and were entire strangers to me.

How would it do to show them a stereoscope and some scrap-books with views of foreign lands? We obtained the rector's sanction, and thus the beginning of pleasure in the meetings was obtained. In addition to the stereoscope and pictures, and gradually taking the place of them, was the reading aloud, in the first place, of some short

article or tract, such as "Mother's Last Words," "Our Father's Care," etc., and subsequently of some instructive story-book, the interest in which served to induce regularity in attendance. "Homes in Humble Life" they liked very much, and each evening that I asked "if they would rather listen to the reading or go on with their conversation," which was making a cheerful hum through the room, there was a unanimous call for "the reading! we always like the reading."

Finding their enjoyment so keen of books read aloud, we threw open the parish library to them, and were astonished at the number of books taken out. There is not a week in which less than two-thirds of the women take out books, and I know, from questioning them, that they are read.

In the mean time, however, the visiting had been continuous, unintermitted. Every family in which we had received even a gleam of encouragement was called upon again and again, and by dint of importunity and perseverance one and another was induced to attend. Gradually the object of these meetings grew clear to them, and little by little we ladies won their confidence and affection, so that when spring came, and we invited them and their husbands to a simple little festival in the church, we had about thirty mothers on our roll-book, though we had never more than half that number in attendance. Though the meetings were kept up through the summer, there was no perceptible numerical increase, but a very pleasant social feeling was springing up, together with some religious interest. In the fall, however, everything began to wear a different aspect. The Germans who could not understand English, and others who came from mere curiosity, or to see what they could get, had gradually dropped off; those who were left came from real interest, began to feel at home, and became themselves efficient helpers in

drawing in others. And now, at the close of a year, in a new field, and under discouraging circumstances, we feel that the foundation is at last laid, and we look forward prayerfully and hopefully to the coming season, trusting that we shall see gathered into the fold of the Good Shepherd some precious souls which have hitherto been as sheep going astray.

The present number of mothers on our roll is forty, the attendance about thirty. We have also just commenced a Sunday Bible-class for them, which promises well, sixteen of our mothers having been present on the third Sunday after it was organized.

Simultaneously with the mothers' meeting, I undertook the establishment of a Bible-class for men. One young man had expressed to the rector his desire to become a member of such a class. I invited a young grocer to join it, and he instantly accepted the invitation, adding, "With your permission, I will bring a friend with me." This was quite encouraging, and I went on my way rejoicing. Several weeks spent in visiting resulted in many promises of scholars, principally from wives on behalf of their husbands, whom I could rarely find at home. I must confess to a feeling of disappointment on arriving at the class-room for the first time, on the last Sunday in November, at finding there only the three young men I have spoken of; the next Sunday there were but two, one of the above being sick.

I called again at all the houses at which I had before met any encouragement, and received various excuses; company had prevented one, a funeral another, some had forgotten, and all were evidently indifferent. I saw that invitations at second-hand (through the wives) would effect nothing, and therefore made efforts to see the men at their dinner-hour or at their work. Thus several promises from the men themselves were obtained, most of which I felt at

the time were given merely because they did not think it would be polite to refuse; but never mind, their word had been given, and it is always best to try to believe a man's word. Openings were thus afforded for visit after visit, and invitation after invitation; and thus, by leaving no stone unturned, it came to pass that at the end of two months I had fifteen names upon my roll. But, alas! the roll was anything but satisfactory, for of the fifteen eight were Germans, who I knew could not understand half I said.

As the days grew longer I was able to do some visiting on Sunday afternoons, after the class was dismissed. The result of the first of these visits was encouraging. I had previously seen the man's wife, who had said her husband "might perhaps come;" but he had not yet done so, nor had I seen himself. On this Sunday afternoon Mr. F—— was at home alone, and came up from the cellar all covered with ashes, prepared to make a fire in the cold, dirty stove. He had been asleep almost all day, being tired from working hard through the week. I made him sit down beside me, and drew from him an outline of his history, which was, that though early taught in St. James's Sunday-school, he had rarely been inside of a church for twenty-four years, and was living "without God in the world." After a very earnest talk, by which he seemed somewhat impressed, I knelt with him in prayer. When we rose, his eyes were wet with tears, and he promised to be at the class the following Sunday. He kept his word, and has never since been absent, except when detained at home by sickness. In May he was baptized and confirmed, notwithstanding severe home persecution, and has lived a consistent Christian life ever since.

I had felt that the Bible-class was to be my main work, and had undertaken the mothers' meeting as a separate and, to me, far less interesting enterprise. But I now began to reap some cheering fruits from the latter, in the addition to

the class of one after another of the husbands. Mr. A—— was one of these. As a wounded shoulder disabled him for work, he was much at home, and I thus had frequent opportunities for seeing and inviting him. But he always had excuses, some good, some not so. At last, however, his wife came into the class-room, one Sunday afternoon, radiant with joy. Her husband was waiting outside to see me and join the class. He has been absent but once since then, and a few Sundays ago brought his two sons to be enrolled as members. But, better than all, I hope and believe that he is now truly and earnestly seeking the salvation of his soul.

At the end of a few months, several of the class had found peace in believing in Jesus, and had made a profession of their faith in Baptism and Confirmation. One natural consequence was a desire for the growth of the class whose teachings had been blessed to their own souls, and thus the old members became agents for bringing in new ones. Mr. F—— has thus, directly or indirectly, added four to our numbers. For five successive Sundays he called for and brought to the class a man who had promised to come, but who would otherwise have allowed any trivial excuse to keep him away; and now this man is himself one of the most deeply interested, as well as one of the most intelligent members.

Amongst those brought in from the general canvassing was an English family, who seldom attended any church, the husband going occasionally by himself. Many and many a visit was paid before he could be induced to come to the Bible-class, and for a long time he came quite irregularly, kept away by any slight excuse. I fell upon the expedient of calling for him on Sunday afternoons, just before class-time, and thus he gradually grew more regular; but he showed no interest in the instruction, and in the three or four direct personal conversations I had with

him, he seemed so cold, and hard, and unimpressible that I concluded it would be best to leave him to the gradual effect of that Word which "droppeth as the gentle dew" upon the hardened soil. Two months had passed thus, when one evening I received a note from the rector, in which he said, "Mr. M—— was in church last night. Is he not becoming more interested in religion?" With much self-reproach for my blindness, I resolved to seek an interview as soon as possible, and asked Mr. M—— to wait and talk with me after service. That afternoon we had a dull sermon from a deacon, followed by a few earnest words, by the rector, from St. Paul's appellation of himself as "the chief of sinners." After the congregation had dispersed, and Mr. M—— and I were alone, I was astonished to find my first words met by the quivering lip, the moistened eye, and the tremulous voice of the hitherto cold, hard man. The rock of flint had been touched by the wand of the Spirit, and the waters gushed out. His mind had been deeply exercised and anxious for some weeks; he had talked to his wife about his feelings, and had tried to pray. The rector's appeal had gone to his heart; he felt himself "the chief of sinners," and longed to find a Saviour.

You know the blessedness of pointing a poor soul to "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

I hope and believe that Mr. M—— is now an humble, earnest Christian, rejoicing in Jesus. He longs for the Lord's Day, and finds it all too short; he is deeply anxious about his wife; talks to and instructs her constantly, and prays with her morning and evening. And his efforts on her behalf are being richly blessed. She mourns over her sins with godly sorrow, and reaches after the Cross as her only refuge and hope.

For the past two months I have devoted at least four hours each Sunday to visiting, the beneficial effect of which

has been very marked. Not only is the personal influence of the teacher thus greatly increased, but opportunity is afforded in these visits for bringing home to the individual conscience the lessons of the class, and, moreover, outsiders and strangers are reached and drawn in by acquaintance with the teacher, who without that could never have been induced merely by the persuasions of their friends to attend. These visits are always hailed with delight by members of the class; but in calling upon others I have sometimes encountered rudeness. I always feel that I have no more right to pay a domiciliary visit to a poor man than to a rich one, and consequently make it a point to observe the most scrupulous courtesy and kindness, so that if there should be rudeness shown, I have the satisfaction of knowing that I have not wantonly provoked it; nevertheless, it will come now and then. Here is an illustration:—I had called many times to see Mrs. F——, a young wife, who was always polite, and "very sorry that rheumatism prevented her attendance at the mothers' meeting; she would like her husband to go to the class, and often told him so, but could not persuade him." I made up my mind that I *must* see him, and at last, one Sunday morning at nine o'clock, I stepped up to the front door. It was open, and the family seated at breakfast. I apologized for my early call, and was politely invited in by Mrs. F——, but, as they were at breakfast, I offered to go away and call at some other time, but she insisted that they had finished, and I walked in. After a few minutes' chat with the wife, during which, as well as throughout the previous colloquy, the man had sat in sullen silence and with averted face, I turned towards him, and said, "Mr. F——, did your wife give you the invitation I left for you to come to my Bible-class?"

"Yes, she did," he replied, angrily; "but I wouldn't be seen in such a place, and I told her to tell you so."

"May I ask why not?" said I.

"I wouldn't be seen in such company," was the rude and loud reply.

"Well," said I, laughingly, "you are complimentary; but whom do you object to, teacher or scholars?"

"All of them! They are all alike! I would not be seen with any of the sort."

Well, thought I, he is at least outspoken. There is honesty in the man, if nothing else; he is worth probing.

He had by this time left the table, and seated himself in the rocking-chair, opposite me, with a defiant air. Gently and cautiously I tried to draw him out, and found that he thought his own strict morality far more acceptable to God than all the "cant and hypocrisy" of "professors." He enlarged upon the gossiping and love of dress too common amongst church-goers, etc. I of course could assent to much that he said, and deeply deplored the fact that the lives of many of the men of the world were far purer and more exemplary than those of many so-called Christians. These concessions mollified him, his countenance gradually relaxed, the tone of his voice became genial and pleasant, and the whole man transformed, so that he listened earnestly and attentively to a warm and animated exhortation from me to begin a *true* Christian life himself; and at last, when I arose to take leave, he shook me cordially by the hand, and begged me to come again.

But enough. I have given you a brief view of some of the difficulties we have had to encounter. Yet we have the greatest reason to thank God for the manifest answers He has vouchsafed to prayer for the Bible-class, which has slowly and steadily grown, so that at one of our recent sessions thirty-five members were present, and we have encouraging evidences that the Word is being sent home with power, by the Holy Spirit, to many hearts.

Our work, thus growing upon our hands, frequently sug-

gested the anxious question, "Should not additional Sunday services be provided for these hungry and thirsty souls?" But how was it to be done? Every sitting in the church was occupied and paid for. We had no right to ask our eighty men and women to come in and occupy the pews of others. Another service, at which the pews should be free to all, was obviously needed, and it was accordingly inaugurated by the rector a few Sundays ago, the children of the Sunday-school forming the choir. We cannot know as yet whether these services will prove a success, but we have reason to hope so, from the delight with which they were hailed, and the regularity with which they are attended by "our people."

My tale is told. A simple record of a little work in one corner of the Lord's vineyard; work, however, which would never have reached a tithe of its present proportions without the steady, earnest, and hearty aid and encouragement of the rector, whose visits, smiles, and prayers have proved amongst our choicest blessings.

SECRET OF SUCCESS.

THE WORLD was recently intensely interested in the exploits of three frail yachts contending for the mastery over a wintry ocean, and then throwing down the gauntlet to a prince in the mother country. The wind of heaven furnished all the motive power; but the firm resolve, the sleepless watchfulness, and the indomitable perseverance of the navigators reveal the secret of success.

Is the CHURCH as deeply interested in the exploits of a few fragile women, who, moved by the breath of heaven,

are successfully contending for the mastery over "the wicked," likened in Holy Writ to the "raging waves of the sea foaming out their own shame"?

Men feared to brave this "troubled sea," yet women have launched their frail barks, and, after gaining the mastery over it, have thrown down the gauntlet to the "prince of this world," modestly averring that the secret of their success is "praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance."

These zealous women do not say to the "possessed," Move out of your tenement houses, leave your dissolute parents and associates, be clothed and in your right mind, and then we will try to benefit you. They carry the glad tidings of a free and complete salvation even to young men reveling in unsatiated lust; they pray with all prayer; they watch, they persevere, believing that "where sin abounds, grace does much more abound."

St. Jude thus instructs them: "Of some have compassion, making a difference, and others save, pulling them out of the fire;" therefore they "make a difference" in their instruction and training, according to character, habits, and surroundings, saving some by resolutely "pulling them out of the fire."

"The men of Israel and of Judah arose, and shouted, and pursued the Philistines," after a mere "stripling" had hurled a stone in the name of the Lord; and is not God even now inciting his host to action, by again choosing "the weak things of the world to confound the mighty"? Surely the following paper and others in this volume, furnish abundant evidence that godless youth, the Philistines of the present day, have been bowed with their faces to the earth, by a weapon that even spiritual striplings can acquire skill in using. Eliab, filled with cowardice and envy, tried by ridicule to restrain the brave youth from

doing God's bidding, and after the victory, "Saul *eyed* David from that day and forward."

In time of threatened invasion this Christian community looked to these ungodly youth as saviours of their country, urging them to death where oaths formed the battle-cry. After adding to their defilement by war, Christians pass on to their respective churches, allaying conscience with an expression of holy horror, when disturbed by the profanity or obscenity of these lawless young men; or perchance conscience is further relieved by censuring the police for remissness.

The Psalmist says "the secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him;" and there are few spectacles on earth more sublime than that of a refined, sensitive woman striving to reveal that secret to an unwilling listener who is "enjoying the pleasures of sin for a season," sustained by a "crowd" of kindred spirits who ridicule him for yielding to woman's influence.

The strife does seem most unequal; a delicate woman on the one side, and on the other a brawny, vulgar youth, backed by companions who resolve that evil shall not be overcome with good. When a debased mind first faintly apprehends this secret of the Lord, the devil makes such desperate efforts to choke the seed, that the teacher is compelled to resort to all prayer, supplication, watchfulness, and perseverance, to countervail the plots of the enemy.

This divinely human power has been successfully tested. Reader, do you not hear the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?"—and are you ready to respond, "Here am I, send me"? W.

My dear Sir,—In my last letter I gave you some idea of the plan I pursued in commencing a young men's Bible-class, and the partial history of two of its members, with a brief account of the result of four years' experience. You

desire me to follow up the history of one of these young men, and to tell you also how I approached and gained an influence over the variety of minds in my class.

It really is a much easier work than an inexperienced woman would imagine. I would have refused it had I been told that in a short time some forty strong, rough fellows would be under my care and instruction. But it has grown upon my hands, and now nothing seems so simple, nothing so delightfully interesting, as to labor in this *particular* part of the Lord's vineyard. It comes as natural for me to speak to a working-man or boy about his soul's interest, as to carry bread to an aged woman. I have met with no disrespect, no unkindness; on the contrary, some who are rough to every one else, both at home and abroad, meet me with a gentleness of manner that their parents and friends would think it impossible for them to evince.

They require constant watching and following up; no *flagging* of interest, but perseverance, patience, and *prayer without ceasing.*

Woman can do *her* part in the Church by seeking out and leading to Christ with the voice of kindness and the heart of sympathy, and following up those who, for a little moment, have lent a listening ear to the word of warning from the Sunday-school teacher, or perchance from Christ's minister, but have gone out and forgotten the good impression.

The history of F—— shows the amount of watchfulness and perseverance that are sometimes needful to save a soul from ruin, and it also shows that God blesses and rewards the *importunate* pleadings of his children on behalf of each other.

For three weeks F—— had kept from the tavern, had come regularly to church and Bible-class, had prayed daily, was subdued and gentle in manner, and I had begun to hope all was well, when one night he staggered into

night-school. He had sufficient control of himself to know where he was, and that my eyes were upon him; but my heart was too full to allow me to speak. He tried to write; I saw it was impossible for him to accomplish anything; and, fearing he would get angry, and go away because of mortification, I stood between him and the others to shield him from observation, then gently but firmly drew the copy-book away, slipped a book of travels on the table, and went on with my duties. He placed both elbows upon the table, rested his head on his hands, and read. How much he comprehended I do not know; but it accomplished the end I had in view, *that* of keeping him from the street and from temptation. By the time night-school was over he was quite himself, and willingly stayed with me, but was dreadfully desponding, and for a time would not promise to try any more. I pleaded and talked with him, and read the fifty-first Psalm; showed him how David suffered in mind, how he cried unto God to renew a right spirit within him, and not to take the Holy Spirit from him. The tears came stealing down his cheeks, and in the fulness of his heart he said, "Oh, ask this for me!" Again we knelt and asked that the troubled heart might not be afraid, but believe and trust in the blood of the everlasting covenant. Two evenings after this I saw him at church; but, if the face be an index of the heart, he was *not* in the state of mind I had hoped to find him in. He was surrounded by rough boys, and they all seemed to be in high spirits, which were not entirely controlled even in God's house. I always sat among the boys in the lecture-room at the weekly services; they were such a lawless set, it was necessary. I do not mean all were so, only this especial "crowd," as they were termed. I took F—— home with me after church, and talked with much earnestness of our prayer that the Spirit would not be taken from him. I never talked in a scolding way, but in

a grieved and earnest spirit. I always thought, poor fellows, they get knocks enough at home, I will deal gently with them; and with F—— it was the only way. Passionate, self-willed, and having had taste enough of sin to relish it, it would have done him only harm to be angry with him, and have driven him off altogether; for what was my influence of a few months against a whole life of ungodly actions, habits of evil almost confirmed? As usual, the conversation was not without effect. He left me grave and thoughtful: said, "The devil had met him everywhere that week." I said, "The step forward is harder than the one backward; but pray, F——; strive, and do not doubt."

Sunday found him carelessly standing at the church gate, hat pushed back, and dressed in his working-clothes, except his coat; noisy and loud in his talk, arm-in-arm with another rougher than himself. However, he came to class, and listened with his usual attentive manner. I taught from the parable of the barren fig-tree. The lesson was prepared for F——, and, although he listened, it was not to profit. I saw this with sorrow; but my heart was made glad to hear another say, "That lesson was sent to me;" and that day he resolved no longer to remain a cumberer of the ground, and the resolve, by the Spirit's help, has been kept.

I did not say anything to F—— for a few days, and then, feeling too anxious about him to wait longer, I went to see his mother at an hour I knew I would find him at home. I took the little book, "Come to Jesus," and asked him to read it. He put it in his side-pocket, and said, "How much interest you take in me! I wish I could be what you so much desire." I had been very sad about him, had prayed hours and hours for him since Sunday, and now I felt too full to speak, because of his gentle manner of receiving the book, and knowing he would read

it when he put it in his working-coat pocket. I could not control my pent-up feelings, but cried as heartily as ever I did in childhood. Poor boy! I believe he thought he had broken my heart. I took up the title of the book, and brought every text to mind I could, to show the tenderness and love of Jesus, his free, loving, full invitation to all to come to Him. He did not soon forget this interview; three days after he called to see me. I spent some hours with him, read and prayed with him, heard him renew his promises, and ask tearfully for my prayers for him. Such hours made me very happy, very grateful; drew my own soul close to Jesus, and made the hours of devotion a very heaven below. But still the conflict had not ceased; the soul of F—— was not yet out of prison, so that he could praise the name of the Lord. Again he was bound in the chains of open sin. It was mid-lent, and the day was appointed for the Bishop's visitation. Several in the class had already been to see the pastor, and decided to give their hearts to God. I prayed earnestly for F——, but he held off, and seemed harder and colder than before. He would have ceased coming to church altogether if I had not gone after him, pressed him, made him promise from time to time, someimtes from service to service, that he would be there. I told him something about the different ministers that were preaching for us during the season, to induce him to come and hear this one or another. There were several balls given in the town, at low taverns. At night-school, a short time before the confirmation, F—— said to me, "I am going to that ball to-morrow night." I said, "Oh, do not, F——; Dr. N——, of the city, preaches that night. I want you to hear him." He lifted his hand in an almost passionate manner, and said, "*Let me alone. I will go.* I have made up my mind." I said no more, but, oh! how earnestly I prayed, when he was gone, that God would spare him! I

wrote a note to the pastor that night, though quite late, and asked him to help me, or show me what else, what more I could do with my boy. I felt as though I could be lost myself, if only this boy was saved, and in such language penned my note, for which, of course, I was reproved. The next morning I went to the factory where F—— worked, and again asked him to come and hear this one more sermon. He almost angrily refused. I left him, and went to the church in the evening, with a faint hope that I should see him there, but was disappointed. On my return home, I prayed for more faith, more submission, sat down to read, and tried to leave all in God's hands. To my surprise, about half-past ten o'clock the door-bell rang, and F—— came in, having left the ball in an agony of spirit, fearing God's just anger at his sinful obstinacy. I read to him from a magazine a short sketch of a young man like himself, suddenly hurried into eternity in the very act of defying God and trampling upon the blood of the covenant. He listened until I had finished. I was about to make some remarks, when he said, with much impatience, "Why read me that? I fear God, I appreciate his anger, but *that* does not soften me. I could never do right from fear." "Well, F——, I have said so much to you of the tender love of Jesus, I thought to-day I would say no more, *neither mention* that name which *should* ere now be dear to you." "Oh, do not speak in that way. I do indeed want to be a disciple of Christ, but am so sinful I cannot."

This interview closed, leaving F—— about as he was. Only three days after he fell into a more gross sin than ever, one which I shrank from speaking to him about, and yet, as there was no mistake about it, I felt to do F—— good I must meet him at every point the devil did. I spoke to him with much reserve and indignation. He kept from me for a week, during that time was drinking, and would not come to Bible-class. But upon the following Sunday I

happened to come upon him suddenly. Calling him aside, I told him I wanted to see him in the afternoon to do something for me. This was only a bait to catch him, fearing to leave him alone longer, lest he should be driven too far. There was a sadness about him which gave me some hope. I prayed with him that day, and heard from his own lips his sin and also his sincere sorrow. All that week F—— prayed, and resolved to walk carefully in the narrow way. But Sunday, after class, he said to me, "I give up. Put me out of your thoughts. I am perfectly indifferent. I do not want *you* to be troubled; that is my only care now, for I tell you, truly, I have no desire to serve God." And his face bore evidence of his indifference. He said, "Good-by, I shall come and see the other fellows confirmed."

Confirmation passed over. F—— was present. On leaving the church, he said, "I wish I could have been among them." Seven from the class that night, never to be forgotten by me, made an open profession of faith. I was overfull of happiness, even though F—— was not of the number.

The next Sunday the pastor told us that in a few weeks the Bishop would probably again visit us to confirm. Here was another opportunity for F——; would he still reject the loving invitation? On the following Sunday I taught from the words, "The Spirit and the Bride say, Come!" My whole soul was in the lesson. F—— was serious, his countenance earnest, all the hard look gone. I kept him after the class, pleaded and talked with him of the Saviour's love and his long-suffering towards us; read, and gave to him to put in his pocket, the lines "I have a friend," etc. Tempted, falling, and fighting, F—— continued until a week before the second Confirmation, when he had some trouble with the manager of the mill where he worked, and, losing all control of himself, swore most fearfully, and left the place in bitterness. The next day he told me he was truly

disheartened, and felt entirely indifferent again about his soul. He said, "Good-by; now I shall trouble you no more." Knowing his desperate disposition, I stepped between him and the door, saying, "You shall not go in this way. Tell me more." He replied, "I shall leave the place to get rid of this anxiety about my salvation." I said, "Where will you go to get rid of the Spirit of the living God? You may get rid of me, dear F——, but you will feel the power of the Almighty on land or sea." He said he did not want to suffer as he had, he felt to-day light-hearted, and if it were not for my sad face he would have no concern. "See, F——, how you contradict yourself," I said; "you *are* concerned, deeply so; you want to crush out the Holy Spirit; you are tempting God to let you alone." With a promise that he would not take any step without at least seeing me, he left. He had walked but a short distance, when he saw his elder brother reel from a drinking-house. He hurried home, a fierce conflict going on in his inmost soul, went to his room, buried his head in his pillow, and while penitential tears flowed fast, called upon God to save him from such a course, to help him, for now he would hold back nothing. He came to church in the evening, and went to see the rector, was baptized the following week, and confirmed.

He became a loving follower of the blessed Jesus; all his friends marked the wonderful change in looks, in conduct, and life. He had many struggles with the flesh and the devil, and was sometimes overcome, but, through all, clung to the promises, and never ceased to pray. He is no longer with us, but is now living in one of the Western cities, where he has a good position in a commercial house; having won the confidence of his employers, he is receiving quite a good salary. He has taught, at different periods, in the Sunday-school there, and has also been a

member of a Bible-class. I write to him frequently, and always receive a prompt reply; his letters express the deepest gratitude for the past and present. I would here state that F——, having been placed at work at ten years of age, had had but few opportunities for education, and when I first knew him he could scarcely write at all, though he read pretty well. After he became an open professor of the Lord Jesus, he seemed ambitious to improve in every way, and studied diligently. During one summer, when all the other young men would be seeking some cool place to spend the evening, F—— was at home, in his little, close room, a lamp by his side, his books spread out, trying to master mensuration and other difficult studies. He practiced writing, and qualified himself to take charge of a set of books, a young friend of mine kindly giving him instruction three evenings in the week. Through an acquaintance he obtained the situation he now holds.

Many times his mind and heart have been drawn to study for the ministry. His leisure hours are now spent in reading sacred history, and in improving himself in every way. I have not seen him for eighteen months. I know he is God's child; that his course is onward and upward, and therefore all must be well with him. I have had an imperfect description of his room at his boarding-house. I contrast it with his former surroundings. I remember once going to see him when ill, three years and a half ago. In THAT bedroom I found no Bible, no Prayer-Book, no thoughts of Jesus, no voice of prayer, but on the otherwise empty table lay a pack of cards. The walls that now surround that boy give a far different picture both of heart and life. There, too, is a little table, over which hangs an "Ecce Homo," and upon which lie a Bible, a prayer-book, THOMAS A'KEMPIS's Imitation of Christ, "Come to Jesus," "The Earnest Communicant," "The Cross-Bearer," "The Life of Henry Martyn," and other works

of similar character. May I not thank God, and take courage in my work?

Another instance I will give you to show what is accomplished by never losing sight of a case. A young man I had heard of, I called to see at the factory where he worked. My interest in this one was quickened because he was motherless, and his father a drunkard. Eighteen years of age, and none to look after him. I asked him if he went anywhere to church. He said he was a member of the Presbyterian Church, telling me a falsehood; I thought it was the truth, and replied, "Oh, very well, I never try to draw any away from other denominations." I afterwards learned that the lie was told to get rid of me, therefore I determined not to be put off in this way. I went again to see him, and said, "I hear you have left the other church or class, and have come again to ask you to join my Bible-class." I thought it discreet not to let him know I was aware of his false excuse, as I was unacquainted with his disposition. On this occasion he made the excuse that his winter clothes were too shabby; he expected to get some, and *then* he would come. Three months passed away. I met him occasionally in the street; always spoke kindly to him; gave him something to read, and invited him again to the class. I do not know why this lad interested me so much, for others thought him terribly rough and uncouth in his ways. I went once more to see him, and, it being noon-time, had an hour's conversation with him. Then he told me he had been baptized in the Episcopal Church in France, where he was born. His mother being of French extraction, they had gone there for employment, and stayed some time, and then came to America, where he lost his mother. Asking him some questions about her, very soon I saw there was in his heart a tender spot; but I could not get him to promise me to come to class,—he always had some reason for not coming. When I had known him

about six months, he was seized with typhoid fever, and was ill three weeks. I called frequently to see him, taking with me fruits and other comforts. At first he did not seem to like it, and I was careful not to press myself upon him. It was not a violent case, though it reduced him very much. After a little while he looked less sullen when I called, and smiled me welcome. I amused him, and relieved the time by talking to him and reading interesting narratives, not religious. When he was able to sit up, I said one day, "A——, you told me once you thought your mother regretted on her death-bed not having learned young to love the Saviour of the world?" "Yes, she did; she prayed very hard for God's mercy before she died." "Suppose she were here to-day, A——, what do you think she would want her boy to do?" "Be a Christian," he replied. "Well, my child, I speak for your mother; I love you because you have no mother; I know from experience what it is to have a home broken up in early childhood." He said, "It is hard. God knows, Mrs. ——, many's the night I have laid awake wishing for her again; but I am getting used to it now—getting hardened like." In my heart I thanked God I had found him before he had got *entirely* hardened,—before the tender memories of his mother were quite crushed out or buried. I said, "A——, would you like to be what your mother would desire? Do you know there is a plain, clear way already marked out for you, and that in that way you shall have a never-failing guide? The Son of God is the way; the same Saviour to whom your mother prayed, and to whose keeping she doubtless committed you. And now He sends me to tell you that He wants you to come to him, and He will *lead* you, and never leave you until you are prepared to meet your mother. Shall I pray for the presence of this Friend and Saviour, and the Spirit of God to teach you all you ought to be?" He was too full to speak. We knelt

together; the tenderness of childhood was still with him: at the mention of his mother's name in prayer I heard his frequent sobs.

The following week he was out, and I met him in the street. He came up to me with an open beaming face, and said, "I will tell you why I do not come to class. I am ashamed to say it, but I cannot read; I was put to work when mother died." "That should not keep you away; no one shall know it." From that day I dispensed with the reading in the Bible-class, except to call upon any one I chose to find references, etc. I gave him private lessons every Saturday evening in reading. After he had become attached to me, and the feeling of shame overcome, I persuaded him to come to night-school. He was very brave after he had put away his scruples; many times the other boys would laugh at his mistakes, but he took it in good part, saying, "Laugh or not, I am bound to learn." His progress was slow, and, having joined the army, a break occurred. But in the knowledge most important for him he was not slow. The same warm affection he had exhibited for his mother was, by the Holy Spirit's help, now manifested towards his Saviour. The expression of that boy's face, when in church and much interested, is of the tenderest and most child-like type. Life in the army was a severe test for newly awakened feelings for holy things; his principles were somewhat shaken by it, yet after his return home he regained his Christian standing and was confirmed. His surroundings are of the worst kind, in a house with two drunkards, both relatives. I have spent hours, time and time again, building him up in faith, and encouraging him not to give up because of his home difficulties. I can always read in his face when he has had a hard struggle with the flesh and the devil. Sometimes I have only time and opportunity to say a few words, repeat some text, or make some kind personal remark to assure him he has his

teacher's interest and sympathy. Sometimes, too, I read and pray with him, and gently reprove when he has given way to passion toward his intemperate father. A boy once told me that, if they were walking with A—— after class, and chanced to meet his father in an intemperate condition, they could not get him to speak another cheerful word the rest of the day. From this boy I have had the warmest expressions of gratitude when, after our interviews, he has taken heart again and looked up with a renewed faith and hope to Calvary's blood-stained hill. If, in the deep shades of Gethsemane, the Divine Teacher felt such need of human sympathy that he was constrained to say, "What! could ye not watch with me one hour?" how much must such poor weak followers depend upon it! And how little do these poor followers get! Hard words and still harder blows are what they daily meet; and is it strange, then, that loving-kindness should reach and draw them to that which their neglected hearts need?

One young man, previous to joining the Bible-class, had for three years, at every return of the confirmation season, received a letter from the rector, the last of which he had burned without opening. I asked *why* he had burned it. He replied, "Well, only because it disturbed me, and I just thought it was the easiest way to get rid of it." "Then why did you not burn that of this year?" "I could not, because your note accompanied it, and you had spoken so earnestly to us. When you put that letter in my hand, and told me that it was the voice of my Heavenly Father, I felt much troubled; but in a few days I would have forgotten again, had you not asked me for an answer, and that made me think again. Then your lesson about King Agrippa followed, so you see I could not get rid of it; and I am here to tell you I want you to pray with me." We prayed and gave thanks to the Lord who had led this child at last to hearken to the words, "This is the way, walk ye in it."

This young man fears that had he not then been compelled to give the subject thought, and afterwards been watched over, he would ere now have been traveling the drunkard's sorrowful path. "Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God."

Another case I will give, which further illustrates the fact that following up is essential. M—— had joined the class six weeks after it was organized; he is the son of Christian parents, an exceedingly gentlemanly fellow, the kindest of brothers, and a most affectionate son. He had no bad habits. I wrote him a short note, referring to the rector's letter, and urging him to do the one thing needful he had left undone, honor his Saviour by making an open profession of Him before men. His reply was in these words: "Many thanks, my kind teacher, for your prayers and interest, and I am sorry to say what I know will grieve you; that is, that I have not the slightest desire to connect myself with the Church. I am too light-hearted and happy every day, and never think about religion for myself. I always pray because I have been taught to do so, and go to church because all the family go; that is a house rule." I felt when I got this answer that this kind of heart was often much more difficult to reach than that of one who lived a less moral life. However, I wrote again before Sunday, asking him to ponder those words of Jesus, "He that is not for me is against me;" and to go in prayer and ask God whether he were for or against the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. On Sunday I taught from the words, "He that confesseth me before men, him will I also confess," etc. After the lesson I kept M—— and prayed with him. He was calm, and only expressed his gratitude for my desire for his good, with this word when leaving: "If the members of your class do not all do what is well for us here and hereafter, it will not be because you have left anything undone." Three days after, he came out on the side of

Christ, and he is one who now adorns the doctrine of the Cross.

WOMAN'S HIGHEST MISSION.

THE Jewish Church, by reason of the hardness of man's heart, failed to make woman a spiritual "helpmeet;" yet, even then, the Holy Ghost gave premonitions of woman's true mission, by occasionally commissioning her to teach man the way of righteousness. When the infant Saviour was first presented to a woman, it was in the temple at Jerusalem; and the angels must have watched the effect of that interview with intense interest, for they doubtless knew that through Anna the Prophetess, as a typical or representative woman, God would reveal to her sex their true mission in the Christian Church. Anna, though eighty-four years old, did not try to excuse herself because of her great age or the degradation of her sex: no, "she spake of Him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem," and, although dead, she still speaks to her sisters in Christ, assuring them that telling of Him and his salvation is woman's highest mission. Our Lord and his Apostles uprooted from the Christian Church the oriental prejudices against woman, and the Holy Ghost continues to witness for her high calling as a teacher, not only in parishes where she is guided and sustained by the ministry, but even in military hospitals, where, in some cases, adverse sectarian influences and military restraints have tried her work as by fire.

The following record shows how inexperienced women, who began, trembling, to teach, were encouraged by the witness of the Spirit in the hearts and lives of the sensual

and profane, as well as of moral men. These zealous teachers at first erred in presenting the claims of God too abruptly, or in the presence of others; but afterwards they watched for a casual interview when these men were alone, and then the preparation was made for a more gradual approach by engaging each one in conversation on some subject in which he was specially interested. Woman's quick wit and ready sympathy soon revealed the best mode of grappling advantageously with the indifferent, the profane, and the dissolute, drawing them into a Bible-class, either by direct persuasion or through some trained companion. Instruction of a general character, and even sermons, seldom or never produced any radical change in these men, for slight impressions were soon effaced by the sneers and ribald jests of those with whom the seriously-minded were obliged to associate. To induce men with such evil surroundings to learn to love the truth as it is in Jesus, it was found that "precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line, here a little and there a little," and also prayer upon prayer, for and with the individual, until the knee was bent by the bedside, and Christ openly confessed in baptism or confirmation.

In these military hospitals the men had no privacy for Bible-reading or prayer, and the struggle between the contending powers of good and evil was often long continued and fearful, before the conscious sinner could kneel in the ward where his profanity and irreligion had been manifested. These ministering women, like guardian angels, persevered through days, or weeks, or months, "comforting the feeble-minded and supporting the weak," until God imparted spiritual strength to enable timid babes in Christ to quit themselves like men. None but those who have passed through this fiery ordeal know how hard it is to break away from jovial and dissolute companions, espe-

cially where such are of necessity present at meals, at pastime, and through the night-season.

The eminent success of two inexperienced but zealous Churchwomen imperfectly illustrated in the following sketches should encourage others to work in the Lord's vineyard, especially now, for the Church is more urgently than ever before pleading with her daughters to fulfil their highest mission. W.

One writes thus:

I began this work with many misgivings, with an overwhelming sense of my own insufficiency for these things, and with little or no idea what the work was, or how I should begin it. I felt that there was much to be done, and I could not bear to be idle when such a field seemed open at our very doors, and even the little I could do might be of some use.

The thought of being the instrument, in God's hands, of awakening and leading one soul to the Saviour, was beyond my hopes. I only trusted that I might be the means of comforting or cheering some suffering believer by reading to him the Word of Life. I had had no experience in such work, having scarcely ever spoken to any one on the subject of personal religion; but I soon found that something was needed besides the general instruction given in the Bible-classes, and I began to speak in private to the members of the class, as I had opportunity, of their obligations to obey the call given to them in God's word. I found them most respectful and attentive listeners as I spoke to them of Christ's love, of the duty and privilege of prayer, and of the happiness of leading a Christian life, and I rejoice to believe that many have been benefited by such conversations and induced to come for themselves to the Saviour, and to "taste and see that the Lord is gracious."

In visiting the wards we have many opportunities of speaking to those who are not able, and to many who are not willing, to attend the Bible-classes. For example, one of the wounded men interested me very much from the first. He was bright and cheerful, very amiable and intelligent, and very grateful for such little kindnesses as I was able to show him. I visited him every day, and lost no opportunity of speaking to him of his immortal soul and of his Saviour. He always listened, but did not appear much interested in such conversation, and it seemed to be a relief to him to escape the subject of religion. I persevered, however, and gradually I could see that his mind began to dwell more on eternal things. I found him often reading the Testament, and he was evidently beginning to feel that he ought to *obey* the Gospel as well as read it, but he would not pray, and said he felt no *desire* to be a *Christian*, although he knew he *ought to be*. On my return to the hospital, after a short absence, I found he had begun to pray; and, although at first it seemed almost a matter of form, he persevered, and soon he told me he felt his prayer was answered in some measure, for the *desire* for his soul's salvation, which he prayed that he might have, was given to him; and although everything spiritual seemed very dark and *misty* to him, it was the beginning of a new life, which strengthened every day. He began to grieve over his coldness and want of feeling, and mourn over the darkness of his mind and the dullness of his spiritual perceptions. He could not see *how* a man's heart could be changed by the operation of the Holy Spirit and be made a "new creature in Christ Jesus." He was told to look to Christ and pray for faith; and it was given him, and the light which he had prayed for showed him the darkness he had lived in all his life. Before he began to pray, he acknowledged that he was a sinner, but his sins gave him no real concern. Now the remembrance of his former life of care-

lessness, ingratitude, and forgetfulness of God filled him with distress and would not suffer him to sleep. He prayed earnestly for forgiveness, and his prayer was answered, and he realized that Christ had died for him and that he was pardoned through His all-sufficient sacrifice. He told me that then all was light; that there was no more darkness. He saw and felt his Saviour's love, and could only wonder and adore. Through all this time we had many conversations and much prayer together. Believing, he was baptized, and, as he afterwards told me, he never could have believed that he, who knew himself to be so unworthy, could have been so filled with joy and peace, and so have *felt* the presence of God the Holy Ghost, as at that sacrament. The tears of joy filling his eyes told more than words could have done of his love and trust in his Saviour, and of joy and peace in believing.

He was confirmed a few weeks after baptism, and described his first communion as "the most solemn time he had ever known, and full of comfort and peace." He presses on, rejoicing more and more in his new hope; and, although often cast down and depressed on account of indwelling sin, says that the last few months of his life have been full of the most intense happiness. He attends the Bible-classes regularly, and finds the greatest enjoyment in them.

This is one among many instances in which God has blessed the work in my hands. I feel truly thankful that, with all my weakness and inexperience, He has made me the means of good to some souls who were, like this young man, living in carelessness and sin, without hope and without God in the world.

Another says:

I entered on this field of labor with a deep sense of my own weakness and unfitness for the great work before me,

and with a vague, undefined idea of what the nature of that work should be. Where should I begin, and what should I say? However, I remembered that it was told to Paul, "Go unto the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do;" and so I resolved to make an effort, believing that the way would be made plain to me.

Eighteen months' experience in the wards of our hospital has taught me this lesson, namely, that for *all* who desire to labor for Christ there is work in the great harvest-field of souls; that every one possessed of average mind and abilities can add his or her mite to the treasury of the Lord, can have the honor of forwarding, in some degree, the great work of the Church.

I do not think that the call to-day is so much for those who are highly gifted of God, but rather for the many who are "standing idle all the day" because they cannot see what work is appointed them to do; or for those, on the other hand, who are holding back, doubting their ability to perform the same.

It is not in my power to add one iota to the fund of information already collected as to the practicability of the work before us, nor to give one *original* idea as to the best mode of carrying it on; but I can add my feeble testimony to the goodness of God in employing the humblest means to fulfil his designs. The cup of cold water, in Jesus' name, may be given by any one who has the willing heart and ready hand, and the way that leads to salvation may be pointed out to the wanderer by all who have found it the way of life unto their own souls.

I believe that women are peculiarly fitted for the work in our hospitals. The words of sympathy, the thousand little acts of kindness which they can perform, all open a way of access to man's heart, and he will generally receive from her, who has been to him as mother or sister, the words of warning, entreaty, or consolation. The little Testament,

worn by the service of months or years, is a happy introduction to the subject of personal religion. I take it from the table by the sick man's bedside. Was it the gift of your mother? Has it been a consolation to you? Has it been the means of bringing you to your Saviour? The answer, in too many cases, is, "Not yet!" I tell him that I think I can show him why it has failed to do so. This opens to us the subject of *prayer*, and *this* I have found the chief difficulty in most of the cases with which I have been brought in contact. How can I induce him to pray? I draw from him some outline of his history, and, having established a feeling of friendly interest between us, give him a tract or religious work, marking out some chapter or passage in his Testament as peculiarly applicable to such a case as his. And here it is that the *Bible-class* proves so invaluable. Many will *listen* to the Word of God who will not search for themselves; and so, step by step, many will allow me to offer a prayer by their bedsides, or apart by ourselves, who have not, as yet, the confidence to express their own wants to God.

I have often asked the men, when once they had begun to pray, to *write* a *prayer* for me, and have found it to be a great help in understanding their tone of mind. I would also say a word of the efficacy of *writing* to the men at certain times. When they are hesitating, doubtful which way to go, a few words of encouragement and entreaty, in the form of a letter, have, in many instances, proved more valuable than hours of conversation, aiding them to fix the mind and decide the great question.

When one has been led to feel any degree of real interest in religion, I always try to enlist his sympathy and co-operation in our work, by inviting others to the class, inducing his young friends to forsake, with him, this or that evil habit, reading each other's books, exercising a sort of guardianship over each other, mutually reminding

and encouraging one another. It is so much easier and pleasanter to have companionship and sympathy in all things. At first I did not ask the help of the men till they had made, or were about to make, their open confession of Christ, but in this I erred; for experience has taught me *that to grow in the knowledge and love of Christ, we must do something for his cause.* One said to me, "Since I have interested myself for others, I find that religion seems so much more real and pleasant to myself." Another, "Why, you will make me do the work of a Christian before I am one in heart and life." I ask them to remember certain of their comrades in prayer,—to offer special petitions for them; and I believe that this has been blessed, not only to the one whose name was brought before God, but also to the young beginner who had just learned to cry, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." I cannot tell you what encouragement and help I have derived from this assistance.

In the variety of disposition with which we come in contact, I could not lay down any specific plan, any general rule; my sole object being to bring each man to consider the subject of personal religion. I have tried, after gaining his good will, to direct his thoughts to something higher than that with which they were already occupied. If I ask him to lay aside the immoral novel, I put in his hands not only the best of books, but also one of religious tendency and of interest in itself. If I ask him to leave off the card-playing that led to so much profanity and sin, I try to supply its place with something pleasant and profitable, or innocent. Sometimes I think we forget how long and weary the hours in a hospital must be to a soldier just well enough to demand occupation for his time and thoughts. I strive to make them realize the love and sympathy of Jesus Christ towards them individually, his nearness, his understanding of all their peculiar difficulties and temptations. "I never would have believed it possible,"

said one to me, "that I could have found religion in an army hospital; but I am beginning to learn that Jesus can be found wherever we will set our minds and hearts to seek Him." I will only add, for the encouragement of others, that the good seed sown will surely bear fruit, if not now, hereafter. Another writes to me, "I shall never forget the day when you first came to my bedside and spoke to me of Jesus; when you asked me, did I pray? What you said I had heard before, but it sounded so differently when spoken to me there than when preached to me." A third writes from the army, "I am trying hard to do my duty as a Christian soldier, but I cannot tell you how much I miss the Bible-class, or how I long to have some one sit down and talk to me just as you used to do. How many of my company would be turned from wickedness if some Christian friend would only speak a few kind words to them!"

This imperfect sketch will, at least, bear testimony to one fact, that God works by the humblest means and will abundantly bless these efforts to the salvation of souls. There has been nothing in any way remarkable in the means or mode adopted, only such as lie open to any earnest Christian woman. All are capable of employing them for the same end. God has surely blessed our efforts above my highest expectations; and if this be the means of encouraging some other weak fellow-Christian to go forth in the strength of our dear Saviour, whose "grace is sufficient" for us, I shall be more than satisfied.

The following narrative will serve to illustrate our mode of dealing with men who at first manifest great reluctance to be approached on the subject of religion:

When I first saw Sergeant W., he was very ill, suffering from a severe wound. I visited him daily, and it touched my heart to see his patient, cheerful endurance of pain; there was always something bright even when he

was suffering most; he was always so grateful for any little kindness shown him, and ready to share every delicacy with his sick comrades. "You know that we are all soldiers together," was his unanswerable argument. But when I first introduced the subject of personal religion, his whole countenance changed, and its expression of stolid indifference showed me plainly that as yet these things were "foolishness" to him.

Let him tell his own story,—he writes: "It is just a year ago to-day since I arrived at the hospital. I was so sick that I do not remember much about your first visits. But I do recollect the day when you sat down beside me and spoke to me of our dear Saviour. After you went away I tried to think of something else, but what you said about our best Friend, who would help me bear my pain, would keep coming back to my mind. I hoped that you would not come again, for I dreaded what you might say to me. But, thanks be to God, you did come back, and tell me of Christ, and Him crucified, and I was brought to see my sins and turn to my Saviour." So weeks passed on, and I could see no change in his spiritual state. All that I said to him on this subject he listened to with the manner of one who has made up his mind to endure an evil from which there seemed no escape.

The short notes in my diary prove how discouraged I felt concerning him: W. seems altogether indifferent. I can only pray for him. He allowed me to read to him daily from the New Testament, and any book that I might choose. "Come to Jesus" pleased him best, and one day he asked me to leave it with him. How thankful I felt! But the next day he handed it back to me, saying, "My heart is too hard, do not trouble yourself any more for me. I have lived too long without religion to begin now. My mother used to tell me all this, but I can't feel any interest in these matters." A few days after he said, "I do not

think that I am very bad." When I spoke to him of his critical state and the danger of delay, he answered, "I know it all; perhaps I shall feel differently some time." "Why not now? Let us go to Him who knows all our troubles, and ask Him to show us our sins and change our hearts? May I pray for you?" "No,—not now. I cannot see it as you do; I should be a hypocrite if I prayed, and I won't be that." I pointed him to the words, "Him that cometh unto me I will no wise cast out," and giving him Miss Elliott's beautiful hymn, "Just as I am," I left him. Two days after he greeted me with a pleasant smile, saying, "How long you have been away!" "Have you thought much of our last conversation together?" "I have thought of little else, but I cannot think that I ought to pray; it seems as if I must be very wicked." Again I told him of the blood of Christ that cleanseth from all sin. "Are you willing to pray for me to-day?" I knelt by his bedside in prayer, and before leaving, he promised me to try to pray for himself that night.

Alluding to this he writes: "How merciful God has been to me in sparing my life when I was sinning against Him with a high hand! Truly, by the grace of God, I am what I am. How many hours you labored with me, and how stubborn I was! Never shall I forget the night when I made my first prayer. I went into the bath-room to try to pray; and oh, what a struggle I had there! I turned to go out twice, and then would return again. At last, by God's help, I conquered. I knelt and prayed, God be merciful to me a sinner; it was all that I could ask. When I left the room I felt that God had given me a victory over my great enemy." Soon after he was able to attend the Bible-class, and then he met me daily for private prayer and instruction. He seemed overwhelmed with a sense of his own guilt and the long-suffering goodness of God, and at times was very much depressed on account of the cold-

ness of his heart. Not until he consented to look to "Jesus only," did he find rest; then his sole desire was to confess that Saviour, "for I long to feel that I am *his entirely*." Soon after he was baptized and confirmed. The struggle was long and severe, but divine grace prevailed at last, and his subsequent life has proved the reality of the work of the Holy Spirit in subduing the most stubborn heart. In his own words, "I am humbly striving to do my duty as a faithful servant of my Lord. He is all I want; dearer to me the longer I live."

CHRISTIAN CLINICS.

THE term "clinic" is applied to practical instruction in the healing art given at the bedside of the sick, or from notes taken at the bedside. Without opportunities for observing the modes of cure, text-books and lectures cannot prepare the medical student for successful practice. Even the most skilful physician realizes his need of supplemental clinical instruction, for his range of observation is limited, while the phases of disease are ever varying; hence the publication in medical journals of minute and graphic descriptions of improved modes of treatment, with their effect upon the patient. Practical training, the dissemination of detailed information, and conventions of physicians for conference, have wrought such a change in the treatment of *mental* diseases that brute force has been replaced by sympathizing persuasive power, and eighty per cent. of the insane can now be cured. Spiritual maladies are still more varied and subtle, for Satan never stereotypes his temptations, but tries to adapt them to the ever-changing mental, physical, and social condition of each indi-

vidual; and then he artfully conceals the venom behind some fashion or sensual gratification.

During periods of ignorance, superstition, and ultra-spiritualism, the Church failed to appreciate the value of Christian clinics; but *now* human skill and persuasive power are regarded by all intelligent Christians as divine agencies, whether used in ministering to the body, to the mind, or to man's still higher spiritual nature. The Church has the highest sanction for clinical teaching and training; for although her divine Founder intrusted miraculous powers to the first Christian teachers, He also instructed them in the art of spiritual healing, by the bedside, by the wayside, and from house to house. That these teachers were afterwards convened for mutual conference and continuous practical instruction is evident, for "the Apostles gathered themselves together unto Jesus, and told Him all things, both what they had done and what they had taught." The Spirit of her Lord is now stirring up the Church to use all the machinery and instrumentalities that He has sanctioned, but skilled laborers are sadly needed; therefore women helpers are doing good service by publishing details of Christian work, and this new department of Church literature has already quickened latent zeal and encouraged timid workers.

Would that some correspondent could furnish details of the work being done in England! It is reported of a Mrs. Bartlett that, although suffering with heart disease, she began a woman's Bible-class with three members, and that it grew in seven years to seven hundred members, ranging from thirty to seventy years of age. Of this class it is said "that a large number of the converts are distributed throughout the country; some are in foreign lands: many are engaged in mission work, either adopting the same method as that followed out by their instructress, or going from house to house administering the word of Truth."

This extract from "News of the Churches" gives a striking illustration of the value of Christian clinics. The following paper is no less instructive. W.

April 27th.—Going through ward seven, I paused by the bedside of S——, a young man, who was reading the Army Regulations. I stopped, asked about his wound, etc., then said, "God has given us a book of rules and regulations—the Bible. Do you ever read that?"

"I used to in camp when I had nothing else to do. I had a Bible given to me when I enlisted, but I was obliged to throw it away, with my knapsack; I was very sorry."

"Did you ever feel as if you ought to do as the Bible says? Did you ever try to be a Christian?"

"Often, for awhile."

"Yes, I suppose you have felt so when you have heard a sermon, or some one has talked to you about it, but those feelings soon passed off."

"I never had any one to talk much to me about such things."

I found he had had no religious training, and had never been under religious influences. As soon as he was old enough to work, he went into the coal mines at Mauch Chunk, then set off and passed a year or two at sea, and as soon as the rebellion broke out, entered the army. His life had been a wild and reckless one, without God, not taking actual delight in sin, but allowing himself to fall in with the ways of those by whom he was surrounded; he had never sworn much, but used to drink a good deal, and for months at the hospital never went out that he did not return intoxicated.

He told me afterwards that he had often noticed me engaged in earnest conversation with another young man in the ward, and would say to himself, "If I had some one to talk in that way to me, I think I should try to live a better life." After giving these particulars about himself, he said,

in answer to a question, that though he was not as bad as some, and had never sworn much, yet he knew he was wicked, and that if he should die as he was he should be lost.

"Yes, when we come to stand before the bar of God, it will do us no good to say that we are no worse or not so bad as others; we shall be tried by God's pure and perfect law, and that law says that for every idle word, for every foolish thought, how much more for every sinful thought, word or act, we shall give account! How can we stand before a holy God, and what can we answer Him? It is fearful to think of it. But the Bible tells us that He is willing to forgive all our sins if we will only come to Him and ask for pardon through his dear Son, Jesus Christ, who died for us. Will you not come? Do you ever pray?"

"Once in awhile, but it does not seem to do any good."

"Eating once in awhile would not keep a man strong and healthy, so praying once in awhile cannot be expected to do the soul much good. No, you must form a habit of prayer, go to God morning and evening to ask for the forgiveness of sins and for strength to resist temptation. Will you not do so?"

"I would be afraid to promise. I might forget it."

"If the doctor ordered you to take a certain kind of medicine twice a day, you would take it, even though you did not immediately feel the good effects, and you would not forget it if you thought your health depended on it."

"Oh, no; but I am trying to break off my bad habits."

"It is useless to try without God's help; you cannot do it. Have you not often made good resolutions and tried to overcome bad habits and failed?"'

"Oh, yes."

"You can do nothing good without God's help."

"Oh, I have enough strength of mind to do a thing if I once set myself about it and resolve that I will."

"Well, then, resolve that you will pray twice every day." He found himself fairly caught, and promised.

"Pray, my young friend,—pray very earnestly for pardon through the blood of Jesus, and for strength to live a Christian life."

I left him a book to read. He told me a few days afterwards that he had been praying regularly, and meant to keep it up.

May 3.—Talked with S—— about the Pilgrim's Progress, which he had been reading. He wanted to know if no one in the world were perfect; felt sure he knew one person who was.

"No, that is a mistake; the Bible says there is no man that liveth and sinneth not, that we have all gone out of the way, there is none that doeth good, no, not one. And every true Christian confesses with shame and sorrow that he is a miserable sinner, that when he would do good, evil is present with him. No, no one is perfect; each one of us needs a substitute,—a pure and holy being to keep God's commandments for us, and to bear the punishment which we have deserved for breaking them. And Jesus Christ comes and offers to be our substitute."

"I feel that I am yet very sinful."

"Bring your load of sins to the foot of the Cross, as the pilgrim did, take Jesus Christ for your substitute, your Saviour."

"In going into battle, I used often to wish I was prepared, but knew it was too late then; I fear it is so now. I am not earnest enough. I feel very serious at times, but at other times indifferent, and fear I shall be just the same as ever when I get back to camp. I will persevere and continue to pray."

Just at this state of his religious history and whilst engaged in reading the "Pathway of Safety," he was removed to another ward, out of my reach. A day or two after-

wards, just before leaving for a short visit to Washington, I wrote him a letter expressive of my affectionate interest in him, and pointing him to the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.

Partly owing to the interest expressed, which his position at the time made him particularly prize, partly to the new and clearer view given of God's amazing love for a sinful world, this letter had a most powerful effect upon him; his heart was completely melted; he could not refrain from weeping, and each time he tried to control his emotion, the tears would burst forth afresh; at last his feelings completely mastered him, and though it was mid-day and the ward full of men, he fell on his knees at his bedside and poured out his whole heart in humble confession of his sins to that merciful heavenly Father whom he had so grievously offended.

After my return, I had frequent interviews with him, but though he was extremely earnest, it was difficult to introduce the full blaze of gospel light through the dark cloud of ignorance which enveloped his mind; his progress was slow; there were many doubts and fears; but at last the sun of righteousness arose with healing in his beams.

May 19.—S—— is "striving, sometimes earnest, sometimes not so much so; is getting less sinful and hopes by-and-by to overcome his sins entirely,—thinks he can do so;" he is self-confident; does not think he can get forgiveness now; is sometimes tempted to give it all up. I told him of the freeness and fulness of salvation by the blood of Christ alone, that we must place no confidence in ourselves, our good resolutions, efforts, etc. He finds it hard to live a Christian life, sinful thoughts and habits have so long controlled him, the world will come in. He thinks, in fact he is quite sure, that if he could only live alone for a week or ten days he could become good.

I told him of the power of the tempter which can draw us away from the right path whether we are alone or in

company. Satan found Jesus alone in the wilderness, and there spread before Him his fiercest temptations. So, for many ages in the Christian Church, men and women thought as you do, and shut themselves up in monasteries and nunneries to get away from the temptations of the world, but they soon found that their worst enemies were their own sinful hearts stirred up by Satan, and that no bolts or bars could shut them out.

He said that he had been trying to exercise self-control, but found he could not do so, though he had told Mr. —— that he could.

This gave me the opportunity to show that we do not understand our inability to do right until we earnestly set to work to try, just as the man recovering from a fit of illness is surprised, when he first tries to walk across the room, to find how weak and tottering his steps are. And we are not only very weak, but very sinful; we have no idea *how* sinful, until we begin to look into our hearts. On first going into a dark room, you can see nothing, but gradually, as the eye accustoms itself to the darkness, you see first the large, then the small, objects in the room. So with our hearts: at first we notice only outward and glaring sins, but, by degrees, we find inward and hidden ones, sins of thought and feeling which we did not suspect.

I tried, moreover, to cultivate in him the grace of humility by our Saviour's example, for He was meek and lowly in heart, and by that of St. Paul, who, though the greatest of the apostles, calls himself the "chief of sinners."

June 1st.—Again talked to S——. He thinks he is getting along well; "he does a great deal better than he did."

June 2d.—Long talk with S——; most satisfactory. He feels his sins, but knows he does not feel them as he should; would rather be a Christian than have all the gold and silver in the world,—alluding to the text I had written in his Testament, "What shall it profit," etc. He thinks God

will not pardon him right away, because he has been such a great sinner; that God means to keep him praying and seeking awhile longer.

"You are making a great mistake there. God offers salvation as a free gift, and you are thinking of paying for it by your prayers and efforts. Christ has already paid for it. The Bible tells us that it is through Christ alone we can hope for pardon. His blood alone cleanseth from all sin. You put your feelings and your efforts in the place of Christ. He comes to us and offers pardon as a free gift now. Will we take it now, or wait until we have a stronger desire for it, 'until we can pay for it'?"

I found that he was expecting that God would by-and-by reveal himself to him and make him suddenly very happy by the assurance that his sins were all forgiven.

"Is that God's method in nature? In winter, the trees are bare and lifeless; no grass or flowers are to be seen, everywhere is bleakness, and cold, and desolation. Does everything suddenly change into the full glory and beauty of summer? Does there not first come the budding of the early spring, the gradual unfolding of the leaves, and then the full covering of field and tree? Do we suddenly rush from the darkness of midnight into the full, clear light of noon? Is there not first the gradual shading of darkness into light, the gray dawn, then by slow degrees the sun shining brighter and clearer until noon?"

I questioned him closely; asked if he really disliked his old ways; "if a life of sin and a life of religion would equally lead to heaven, which would you choose?"

"A few weeks ago I should not have known what to answer; now I feel sure that I prefer the ways of God."

He had such a horror of hypocrisy and fear of saying more than he felt, that he was unwilling to write anything about his feelings or to speak of them publicly. He thinks he "feels some love for the Saviour, but not as he ought."

"That is very true: we none of us love Him as we ought. It is because our hearts are so cold and hard, and because we do not think of all He has done for us, of his wonderful love in coming down from his throne in glory, his bright home in heaven, to be a poor, despised man here on earth, and to bleed and die for us, his enemies. Ah, if we would but remember the nails which pierced his hands and feet, the crown of thorns, the agony He endured upon the cross when he felt that God's anger rested upon Him, as our representative; if we would but think how He was mocked and scourged and spit upon, and finally crucified for us, surely, surely we should love Him more! Read about Jesus' love and sufferings, think about them, and pray God to help you to love Him more."

"I do pray often,—not morning and evening only, but whenever temptation comes, and enjoy it very much. I try to keep thoughts of God always in my mind."

"How do you think of God, as the great Creator?"

"Yes, of his power."

"He is great, and high, and mighty; but when we think only of these things, we are filled with fear, and God seems far off. He took our nature upon Him and became a *man*,—the man Christ Jesus,—and now He comes very near us. He endured sorrows, trials, temptations like ours, and He knows our trials and feels the tenderest love and sympathy for us in the midst of them; if we think of Him thus, we cannot but love Him."

I was very much struck, in the course of this conversation, with the strong fear he expressed lest his feelings should change when he returned to camp, and he be led away by temptations. This was in marked contrast to the self-confidence of a few weeks back. I encouraged him by the promises of help to the feeble and the tempted, help always to be had in answer to prayer, and assured him that I prayed for him. He thanked me, and said he "prayed for those

who were trying to instruct him; that he did not know how to pray very well, but he tried to have it come from the heart."

June 3d.—I introduced S—— to the chaplain, who spoke a few words to him on the duty of personal religion, after which S—— and I had a long talk, in which we went over very much the same ground as yesterday. He said that "last evening he got to thinking of our Saviour's sufferings for us, and he cried for a quarter of an hour,—he could not help it,—although crying is unusual." He thinks he "does not feel just right, or God would pardon him" (that is, give him the assurance of pardon); he "wants to get closer to Jesus." He reads and prays constantly; does not like to do anything else, lest his religious impressions should leave him.

June 5th.—I was in the ward talking with M——, when S—— came in, with a beaming countenance; he had been looking through the wards for me; he wanted to tell me how much good the tract "I have my Ticket" had done him; he had felt so happy the past hour, he could see it all now, he could see how God had put away his sin, he could take Jesus as his Saviour.

This faith not only produced joy and peace, but instantly proved itself a living faith, for he asked me to give him some tracts for distribution, and to go with him to see a young friend, who had, like himself, just commenced the Christian life.

Just at this time a large number of new patients came to the hospital, the Bible-classes were commenced, and I was too much occupied to make any entries in my diary. I saw and conversed with S—— frequently; his progress was extremely satisfactory, and I proposed that he should be baptized. He assented, and in preparation for baptism, began to study the Catechism.

June 24th.—More than an hour with S——, explaining

the promises made in baptism, etc. He is most earnest and conscientious. I spoke of the pomps and vanity of the world.

"Those things are no temptation to me."

"What!" said I, "don't you care to rise in your profession?"

"Oh, yes! I came near leaving here lately on that account. I had a letter from a friend in the regiment, to say that I had better return, as there was a prospect of my getting a commission, and I thought I would go, even before I was ordered off; but that day you said a great deal in the Bible-class about giving up all for Christ, so I wrote to my friend that I would not return for a month."

June 25th.—Explaining the Creed to S——. He asked, "Is it wrong for a person to wish to die?"

"Why," said I, "do you sometimes wish to die?"

"Sometimes, when I hope I am prepared."

I said, "It is better to say, 'Thy will be done.' It is better to work and fight for Christ, and thus show our love and gratitude for what He has done for us."

"Yes, that is true."

S—— heard from home that he had been baptized in infancy. I saw him for an hour almost every day, instructing him in the Catechism, and giving him such counsel as I thought he needed. He was very ignorant, and very full of doubts and fears, but intensely earnest, perfectly absorbed in the one thing.

On the 14th of July he was confirmed.

July 15th.—S—— was feeling utterly downcast, and wanted me to comfort him, yet thought it was perhaps wrong to go to any one but Jesus; thinks he ought to feel so happy and peaceful, fears he is all wrong because so depressed.

"Not at all. It is the natural reaction from the excitement of yesterday. And, beside, you know your reconciliation with God and his love to you do not depend on

your changing *feelings*, but on the blood of Jesus, which has purchased pardon for you, and God freely bestows the Holy Spirit on you. This is the ground of our hope. Christ Jesus, the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever, the Rock of our Salvation."

He felt greatly comforted.

Speaking of going back to his regiment, he said, "I think I shall probably be killed; but I have no fear. I have lost all hope of promotion. I care not for that, or for wealth, or any earthly thing, if I can only love God more. I feel that I am more sinful than any one in the world who is really seeking God, that I have such a very wicked heart. I had no idea how wicked it was until I began to try and be a Christian, and I feel that I have so little love for Jesus, when I ought to have so much."

July 17th.—S—— has been, and is, sorely tempted. "Has not any faith left, and thinks there is no hope for him."

"You intend, then, to give it all up?"

"Oh, no, I never will do that, I hope."

Yet he felt wretchedly unhappy, confounding temptation with sin. I tried to explain the difference, and to show him that he needed to be looking away from self, "off unto Jesus."

A few days later my diary says: S—— feels brighter and happier, and "only wants more faith."

July 22d.—Talked and prayed with S——. He was in the Bible-class, and now he is gone! God forever bless him! All he wants is "more love to God." I spoke of "God manifest in the flesh—Jesus—as the one altogether lovely, the chief among ten thousand, tender and sympathizing, the ever-present Comforter and Friend."

From the time S—— left the hospital, until the first of February, each week brought me a letter from him. Every letter breathed a spirit of earnest devotion to his Saviour,

of deepest humility, and of ardent love for the souls of his fellow-men. I have since heard that his efforts for the spiritual well-being of his comrades were blessed to some of them, and that his holy and consistent life commanded the respect and won the affection of every member of the regiment. "They all loved him as a brother," said one of their number to me.

One evening in February I was told some one wished to see me, and going into the entry, S—— met me, with the salutation, "I have come instead of the letter this week!"

He had been sent here on recruiting service, and for several weeks I had frequent opportunities of seeing and conversing with him. His ardor and earnestness in the Christian life were extraordinary. He had no thought apart from religion, no wish but to glorify his Saviour. I think these feelings were on the point of degenerating into fanaticism, standing almost alone, as he did, in the regiment, and cut off from religious instruction. He said "something told him" he must go off and pray every two or three hours, and these hours sometimes very inconvenient ones; "something told him" he must pray aloud, and so very loudly as to attract the attention of all around.

But with so sincere a desire to love and serve God acceptably, such anxiety for instruction, and such a docile, childlike spirit, it was not difficult to make him understand that God's Word and our own reason, not an undefined "something," are our guides in the path of duty, and that we should be as careful, on the one hand, not to give occasion to the enemies of religion to scoff and jeer, as we should be, on the other, not to be ashamed or afraid to confess Christ before men.

He *daily* grew in grace. His whole delight was in prayer, in reading the Bible, and in religious conversation. I often gave him religious books to read. He read them, but seemed all the while to be *thirsting* for the Bible, to

which he returned with fresh zest. Whenever he came to see me, he had some passage or text to be explained, some question of duty to propound.

Whilst recruiting for the army, he was for some weeks stationed at the rendezvous, where there were, at that time, many sick soldiers; to all of these, as well as to every recruit whom he enlisted, he was a missionary of the Cross, delighting to speak to each one of the love of Christ, and to urge them to accept, without delay, his gracious invitation to come unto Him, and be saved.

He went to the hospital several times for the express purpose of seeing and having religious conversation with the members of his regiment who were there. And when he went home, to Mauch Chunk, he made his influence so decidedly felt that one or two of his young cousins gave their hearts to the Saviour, and entered upon the Christian life.

On the 27th of May, reaching home later than usual from the hospital, I found S—— waiting to see and bid me good-by. He was going that evening to his regiment. I can now recall many things which show that he felt what—strange as it may seem—most soldiers do not feel: that he should probably be killed. But he was perfectly calm and cheerful, though he keenly felt the pain of parting.

As we were about to kneel in prayer for the last time, I said, "S——, what shall I ask God for you?"

"Ask," said he, "that my heart may be more filled with the love of Christ, that I may be more earnest, and continue faithful to the end."

"But," said I, "you are about to be exposed to fearful danger. Shall I not ask God to keep you safe?"

"No," said he, "I do not care to ask for that."

So we knelt, and after a brief but fervent and beautiful prayer from him, I commended him to our covenant God and Father, imploring protection from spiritual dangers,

and committing him, body and soul, into his holy care and keeping.

My heart was in my throat as I took a hand in each of mine, and said, "Good-by, S——. May God forever bless you!"

He could hardly speak, but, with a look I can never forget, he said one word, "Mother!"

He had gone half-way down-stairs, when he turned, and said, "——, I thank you very much for all you have done for me."

Again he said good-by. It was our last good-by! As I went into the parlor, I said, "Oh, how dreadful is this war, which crushes out young lives like that!" Alas, how little did I think that three weeks from that night he would be stretched a lifeless corpse in the hospital of the Second Corps, in front of Petersburg!

I received two letters from him after he left. The long promised commission was his, and with it came the temptation to shrink from kneeling as frequently as usual in prayer in the presence of his fellow-officers, but the temptation was instantly overcome, and his Saviour fearlessly confessed before the ungodly and profane.

Elated, too, as a poor and ignorant young miner might have been at such an elevation, he could honestly say that he cared but little for it, and that his prayer was that his affections might not be set on earthly things.

Three days before his death, writing to a young friend who had been brought into the fold of Christ mainly through his influence, he says he hopes his letter "will find him growing in the love of Jesus," and exhorts him "to speak a good word whenever he can." His last letter to me closes with the "trust that he may live unto God and near Him."

On Friday afternoon, June 17th, he wrote thus to his mother: "There need and ought to be continual prayer

offered to our Maker for a speedy restoration of peace. If there were more praying, there would be more success to our armies. Pray for peace; that God may impress his Holy Word deep into the hearts of the world; that they may live unto Jesus, who died for sinners. . . . Pray earnest; have morning and evening prayer in the family. People can't see fully at home the prayers that ought to be offered to our Master for sin to cease; that every heart should be humbled in the sight of our heavenly Father. I trust that you and I and all others may try to serve God until our lives end, who drives fear away, and cheers me with his precious promises. Pray for me, that I may live unto my Saviour, and that faithfully."

After writing this letter, he knelt in prayer, then formed in line of battle with his company. A column of the Ninth Corps was advancing to storm the enemy's works in their front, and about two hundred yards distant. S—— called out, "Give them another cheer, boys!" At that moment a shell exploded, and a piece of it struck him in the breast, inflicting a large wound. He spoke not another word, and in five minutes he was dead. It was less than half an hour after he arose from his knees in prayer!

Was not that prayer answered? Was he not faithful to the end?

A REMEDIAL INTERMEDIATE STATE.

THE Church being powerless over disembodied spirits either for weal or woe, is under the higher obligation, in proportion to her authority, to diversify to the utmost her efforts to save those still in the body.

If, from lack of consideration for those whose lot is labor,

any such have been estranged from the Church, this increases her responsibility to seek them out, and to provide some intermediate remedial state in which prejudice can be removed by Christian fellowship, the simple gospel truths inculcated, and the ignorant trained to unite profitably in her public liturgical worship.

That there is alienation is apparent, and that the fault is not wholly with the working class is equally evident, for surely it is neither apostolic nor catholic to allow the rich to monopolize the best teachers of religion, and also churches that have been solemnly consecrated to "the public worship of God," with this injunction, "Make not my Father's house an house of merchandise." Indiscreet alms-giving also alienates, for it is sometimes used as a lure to draw the improvident to church, making them still more idle and unthrifty; such are quite willing to occupy the pauper pews or benches, but the more thrifty absent themselves, because in such cases all church-goers of their class are invariably charged with mercenary motives. They send their children to the Sunday-school because it is adapted to their tastes, and is conducted on catholic principles; and working people freely attend mothers' meetings and Bible-classes when there is heart in them, and consideration is shown for their instinctive feeling of independence.

Prejudice against a liturgical service is rapidly passing away; for beneficial brotherhoods use forms of prayer, and the abuse of extemporaneous prayer in public worship during recent political excitements has disgusted many working people and driven them from other religious bodies. It is apparent that our liturgical service, after proper training in its use, is well adapted to all sorts and conditions of men in their public worship, but it is neither exciting nor popular, being somewhat complicated until strangers become familiar with it. Experience has demonstrated the absolute need of a remedial association in which the igno-

rant may be socialized and trained to profit by the full public services of the Church.

Hospitals and other charities are preparing the way for an aggressive movement; but the Church must become as apostolic and catholic in practice as she is in doctrine, or success will be partial and temporary. The best medical skill, the most sympathizing nursing and appropriate diet, are all furnished equally to every inmate in a hospital, whilst in the Church, little interest has yet been manifested in the more fatal spiritual ailments of the same class of adults. That a brighter day is dawning is evident, for the working classes have been largely represented in recent confirmations. The following paper from an experienced lay-worker tells how men, whose lot is labor, are drawn from their lairs into the Bible-class, a remedial intermediate state, and through it to Christ and the Church. W.

DEAR SIR,—You ask me to give some account of my method of conducting a Bible-class.

Instead of that, I send you a few hints, illustrated by facts and conversations; a full unfolding of the subject would be too voluminous and wearisome.

A Bible-class teacher should be a diligent student of two books, God's Word and the human heart, in order to gain the "wisdom whose price is above rubies." In these studies I am as yet a mere beginner, still, I will give you the promised sketches, although they are very incomplete and unsatisfactory.

"Mrs. N——," said one of the class to me one day, "I will have to give up all hope of getting Mr. O—— to the Bible-class; I think nothing will induce him to come. Suppose you and I go together to see him; you know two are better than one, any day." We went. Mr. O—— received us very courteously, but I fancied he was not much

pleased with the prospect of being again urged to the class, so when my guide immediately opened with that subject, I gently introduced another, drew him out about his children, his trade, his army experience, etc., by which means it was easy to gauge the man while striving to win his confidence. At last, rising to go, I said, "Mr. O——, I should be very glad to have you come to our Bible-class and see how you like it." "I think I shall come next Sunday." Since that time, for nearly four months, he has never been absent.

Sunday morning January 6th.—Called to see Mr. F—— who had been several times invited by a member of the class; he is an engraver, and had lately been engaged in printing new paper currency for the Italian government; this easily led to conversation on the wonderful changes which the past few years had brought about in Italy, some of which I had seen, and on the miserable condition, spiritual and political, in which Rome still continues. In the course of the conversation, I had the opportunity to say a few words on the importance of personal religion, but nothing very pointed. As I bade him good-by, he said, "Well, I shall join your Bible-class, for I think I can learn something from you!" He also has been true to his word.

After a man has fairly committed himself by allowing me to put his name in my roll-book, I seize upon every opportunity for getting acquainted with him, each chat of even five minutes serving to establish friendly relations. I try not to allow my anxiety for their salvation to draw me into the error of pressing the subject of religion too hastily upon them, yet no man has been many weeks in my class without an invitation to a private conversation, generally at my own house. Mr. C—— comes; he is a Scotchman, and has lived in England. I have many questions to ask about both countries. He can give me information about the relative condition of working-men in both; of the manufacture of the article made in his trade, as carried on there

and in America. Moreover, he and I have seen the same cities, cathedrals, museums, etc., in England and Scotland, and thus have a subject of common interest. I am no longer the teacher, but the companion and friend, and quite naturally the conversation becomes personal. He is drawn out with as little direct questioning as possible, as little display of curiosity, by my interest in his early home and parents, his boyhood and training, and in his later experiences of life.

Or, it is Mr. A—— who is paying me a visit; he is young, has seen less of life, and is somewhat embarrassed, not knowing exactly what he has come for. I talk to him about his widowed mother; about the children; his school-days; the studies he has pursued, etc. If he likes geography, I tell him a little about foreign lands; if he has read any history, I give a few incidents which are new to him; if he has been in the army, I narrate to him some of my own experiences during the war; any subject which gives me the occasion to awaken interest, puts him at his ease, and I learn his characteristics. In both these cases, and in many others, I have found it wisest not to alarm or embarrass by too pointed and personal conversation on religion, but to win respect and confidence first, as a preparation for the other. But the direct appeal is not long delayed; it is not by appointment, but, as it were, incidentally. I called one day at Mr. B-——'s shop to leave a ticket for a lecture, and have a few minutes' talk. The shop and the business were the first topic, followed by temperance, as the lecture was to be on that subject, and a few remarks on the powerlessness of temperance or morality to make men what they ought to be. And then, "Mr. B——, where do you stand? Are you a Christian or are you not?" One is met in the street, another is spoken to in connection with a library book he is selecting, another is detained after class, with another I walk home from church, and thus, without making any attempt

at thorough probing, I come to speak of eternity, the preciousness of the soul, God's patient waiting, our Saviour's tender love.

"Mr. L——, have you accepted the gracious offer of pardon and salvation?" "I am sorry so say I have not. I often think about such things, but I would rather not undertake to be a Christian until I am sure I can be a thorough one, I know so many back-sliders."

"But the same God who calls you, promises to give all the strength you need; it is presumption, not humility, to wait until you feel as if you could carry on the work. The man with the withered hand stretched it out at the Saviour's word, and it was made whole."

Mr. L——'s reply to the question is, "If God wants me to be a Christian, He will make me one; I can't be a Christian of myself. When He is ready, He will send his Holy Spirit to convict me of my sins, and I will be all right."

"Has God then made man a mere machine? I thought the glory of man was his free will? Surely God would not mock us by telling us to choose, to come to Him, to turn from our sins, if He knew, all the while, that we could not do so?"

Mr. K—— answers the same question thus: "Oh, I don't believe all that's in the Bible. I think all that about hell has just been put there to frighten people; for my part I am willing to trust to the clemency of God. I am not a bit afraid to die!"

"We must take the Bible as a whole; it is either true or false,—if true, I cannot conceive of the possibility of God permitting false doctrine to creep into the revelation which He has made to mankind: all must stand or fall together. And, as to the clemency of God, if you mean by that, his passing over sin without punishment, do you not see that such a course would be injustice to his unfallen creatures,

bring disorder and misrule into his government, and totally subvert his authority? Yet, after all, I do not appeal to you by the terrors of hell, but by the love of the Lord Jesus Christ, who, in order to save us from it, suffered the awful penalty of our transgressions upon the cross."

These conversations, suited to the peculiarities of each, are varied infinitely. To one, religion is presented as the duty of man to his Creator, Benefactor, Redeemer; to another, as the crown of manhood, lifting mortals above all low and trivial aims; to others, as the only means of escape from the wrath of an offended God. Then comes the appeal to seek the Lord with full purpose of heart, and to begin prayer without delay. If we are alone in a quiet room, I propose to pray with my companion, which is generally assented to, after which it is seldom difficult to exact a promise that he will begin at once to pray for himself.

The tender blade is springing up, and must not be left many days to the rude blasts of the world without careful oversight. A brief visit often serves as a reminder of the promise to pray, and enables me to exhort to serious and earnest thought, followed by the invitation,—"Come and see me, so that we may have a long talk about these things."

Poor fellows! I think you would feel sorry for them, sometimes, when they find themselves seated for the first time in my library, feeling pleased and complimented by the invitation to visit me, but dreading the ordeal before them.

My visitor is an Englishman, Mr. F——. I show him views of England (especially of his own part of the country), Indian, and other curiosities, and at last some Scripture prints. His embarrassment is gone; he is happy and at ease. The great theme grows naturally from the print, and thence follows an earnest conversation, which I may say is "begun, continued, and ended" in ejaculatory prayer;

so deeply and constantly do I feel the need of the guidance and assistance of the Holy Spirit that all due tact, skill, delicacy, and wisdom may be used in drawing out the history of his early training, religious impressions, and efforts, with a confession of the sins and weakness of his character. I have often heard it said that it is best to have brief interviews with inquirers, in which duty is clearly laid down, and the whole responsibility is thus thrown upon them. My views, founded on experience, are totally different, for I want to learn all the past history, and the intricacies of the heart I have to deal with before attempting to "heal its hurt."

Mr. F—— has a Christian mother in England to whom he writes frequently, and whose letters are read and re-read until he knows them almost by heart. He has always been moral and a church-goer, but no more, though he recognizes the importance of personal piety, and "expects to be a Christian one of these days, but he thinks there is time enough yet."

"And thus the best part of your life has been allowed to slip away,—a wasted life! The great question is not, Will you have time to repent at your last hour and get into heaven? God has made you for his glory and service here and now, to love Him with all your heart, and to serve Him with all your powers; your work, which no one but yourself can do, lies still untouched. And do you say there is 'time enough yet'? When God commands you to come to Him now, do you say to the Lord of the universe, 'Go thy way; when I have a convenient season I will send for Thee?' And above all, will you keep closely barred and locked the door of your heart against Him, who, with dyed garments and bleeding hands and feet, stands there and knocks? Think, too, of your mother's patient waiting, and of her anxious prayers for you through all these years. Oh, how it would cheer her to know that you

had turned to God,—had accepted your Saviour, and entered upon a new life!"

Mr. B—— once had a Christian mother. He grew very wild and wicked after her death, and employed his powers in "taking off" the peculiarities of ministers, repeating their sermons for the amusement of an audience of mockers like himself. The Bible-class teachings awakened him, especially that incident in our Saviour's history, "the soldiers mocked Him." It was not difficult, in conversation upon the sufferings of that most tender and patient Saviour, deeply to touch his feelings, and when I suggested that perhaps his beloved mother had been waiting in Paradise, with eager longing, to learn from angelic messengers that her lost son was found, he could resist no longer.

Mr. N—— had been worse than careless, dissipated, swearing, drinking, running with fire companies, etc. He had sobered down somewhat, before I knew him, but was still entirely irreligious. "Is this the life for a man to live? for one made in the image of God, and created to live with God forever? Is this the life for one who has the responsibilities of a husband and father pressing upon him? Surely your life was spared amid the perils of war for a better and nobler purpose than this."

The interview is closed with prayer, for, as I often say, I would not dare thus to deal with perishing souls without praying for God's blessing, that He will correct and overrule all mistakes; that his Holy Spirit will deepen any good impression made, and carry on his own work in the heart.

In nine cases out of ten, the man thus appealed to and prayed with, promises earnestly and heartily to begin a new life, and when deeply interested and impressed, feels disposed to linger for more conversation; but I prefer to leave him to his own reflections and the teachings of special por-

tions of Scripture, and of some book suited to his case, which I lend him.

The next conversation does not follow for ten days or two weeks, but every opportunity is embraced for a few words of encouragement and exhortation, or a note is written for the same end; the proposed interview is sometimes eagerly awaited; sometimes evaded through bashfulness or reserve; everywhere real interest is felt, but some are prompt in devising methods for avoiding a renewal of the subject which is positively distasteful to them.

I look upon conversation, at this stage, as the most difficult part of the work, for, with most men, as soon as any beginning is made, the idea is apt to spring up that the great change has taken place, and that the whole work is done. In such cases, unless the spiritual plowshare be driven deeply into the soil of the heart, unless there be a thorough probing, the husbandry will be unsatisfactory.

"Mr. H——, I hope you have been praying, as you promised to do, and that you are now decided to be a sincere and earnest Christian?"

"Yes, I see a great change in me. I don't seem to care for those sins which I have been in the habit of committing. I don't feel satisfied unless I pray every day. I like going to church and Bible-class better than anywhere else, so that I long for Sunday to come; and I feel altogether happier than I ever did before."

"What makes you so happy?"

"I feel better satisfied with myself. I feel as if I were trying to do my duty."

"And you think, perhaps, that if you keep on trying, you will by-and-by completely conquer all your bad habits and be a new man?"

"Yes, I think so."

"Well, but what is to become of your past life?"

"Oh, I must leave all that behind, and begin afresh."

"But see how sinful that life has been. God's law shows that there is sin in every idle word, in every foolish thought; recall the thoughts, words, and deeds of sin throughout your life,—sins of childhood, boyhood, manhood; then add to these, the sins of omission, the countless duties unperformed, and above all, that great and crying sin of unbelief in a crucified Saviour. How innumerable they are! How will you give account for one of them, or on what ground can you look for escape from the punishment due to them? If, for breaking the first commandment, and making self or the world your God, you deserve punishment, what have you reason to expect, when each and every command has been broken in act or in spirit?"

"I never realized it before; it is indeed dreadful, but God is very merciful, and I think that if I try earnestly for the future, He will overlook the past."

"You mean that you hope the good deeds of the future will outweigh the evil deeds of the past?"

"Yes, I hope so, by God's help; I know I can do nothing without that."

"Well, supposing that for the time to come, you never sin in thought, word, or deed, but live a pure and spotless life, you think that will satisfy God for all your wrong-doing? If you hired a man to work on your farm for a day, and he spent six hours of the day in destroying your fences, grain, etc., or even in sleep, would you be satisfied with his day's work merely because the last six hours of the day had been faithfully devoted to work? Or, if you owed me one hundred dollars, would it be sufficient for you to promise never to run in debt to me again?"

"But it will be impossible for you to serve God without fault for the time to come, for the holiest Christians declare that they are, to the last hour of life, 'miserable sinners,' 'doing what they ought not to do, and leaving undone what they ought to do.'"

"God has a right to perfect love and perfect obedience from the first hour of consciousness to the last, and it is an insult to Him to ask Him to accept anything less."

Oh, the thrill of joy which passes through my whole being, when the poor soul, thus driven from all self-dependence, cries out in its helplessness, "What, then, can I do? I see no way of escape!"

And the eager delight with which I hold up "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!" Christ's death upon the cross as the "full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world."

In the course of a week or so we have another talk, when I generally find that "everything looks clearer." The sinner is fully aroused to the hopelessness of his condition without a Saviour, is praying earnestly for pardon through his blood, and "hopes to be forgiven by-and-by."

"Why do you say by-and-by? Why should you not be forgiven now? It would be an awful thing for you to die to-night with your load of unforgiven sin; where then would your soul be?"

"It could go but to one place, for I have been, and am still, a wretched sinner."

"And yet you think you will have to *wait*, you know not how long, for pardon?"

"Yes, for I don't think a man can become a Christian all at once. I have been such a great sinner that it will take time for me to become what I ought to be."

"But you need not wait until you become better; all you have to do is to accept an all-sufficient Saviour, just to hold out your hand and receive the 'gift' of eternal life. Remember the thief on the cross, and the Philippian jailer. They were forgiven the moment they believed, and all that the poor Israelites in the wilderness had to do was to 'look and live.'" I try then, as clearly as possible, to explain

the difference between justification and sanctification, "between the act of faith," appropriating the finished work of Christ, and thus making the sinner "accepted in the Beloved," and the gradual work of the Holy Spirit in subduing the corruption of the heart, and bringing the whole man into subjection to the law of Christ.

> "Just as I am! without one plea,
> But that thy blood was shed for me,
> And that thou bidst me come to Thee,
> Oh, Lamb of God, I come!"

The next time I said, "Well, Mr. A——, I hope you have now accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour."

"I hope so; but I don't know. I am trying to believe in Him, but I don't feel any better yet. I can't say that my sins are forgiven."

"But the Saviour says so, if, as a penitent sinner, you are only willing to accept forgiveness from Him."

"If my sins were forgiven, I should know it, I should feel happier; something in my heart would tell me so. The Bible says we have the witness of the Spirit, that the Spirit is the comforter, etc.; and I have often heard Christians say they knew the day and hour in which their sins were forgiven."

"The Holy Spirit does not bear witness of his own work, but of Christ's. 'He shall testify of me,' and it is thus also that He is the comforter, pointing the sinner to his Saviour. What God requires of you is to believe; but you say you must feel. God has given a revelation in which He assures you that 'the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin;' you require a special revelation that your sins are forgiven. Do you not see the unbelief and presumption of which you are guilty?"

"Perhaps I am wrong, yet could not God instantly put into a man's mind the assurance of pardon?"

"Of course; but in the first place you must believe. He does not ask you 'to have faith in your faith, but faith in Him,' and surely you have no faith in Him so long as you ask any other assurance than his simple word. You believe every word I speak, and almost every word you read in histories, books of travel, and even in newspapers; but when the 'God, who cannot lie,' speaks, you will not believe Him. Only consent to put your hand in Christ's hand, and you are safe. This is the first indispensable step,—the peace and comfort of it will follow in due time. The drowning man has only enough strength to climb into the life-boat, but because he lies exhausted and fainting in the bottom of the boat, quite unconscious of his safety, is he the less safe?"

Such cases as this call for every variety of persuasive illustration to counteract the erroneous ideas picked up at revivals.

The same close following up is necessary long after a public profession of faith in Christ has been made. One young man thought "his prayers so cold, he had better not mock God any longer," and had discontinued prayer for three weeks; another had drank too much; another had sworn an oath when suddenly provoked, and both thought it "useless for them to try to be Christians." Another had to endure so much home persecution, that he found his "mind too distracted" to approach the Lord's table, and had been absent several months. All these, and scores besides, have been induced, by cheering and earnest words, with fervent and united prayer, to begin again, and can now praise God for the strength which faith gains by experience, and the closer clinging to a Saviour, to which a realization of their own sinfulness and weakness has led.

I have not said anything of my discouragements, but these are many and great; how could it be otherwise if the teacher is to "walk by faith, not by sight," and is to deal

with men who are immersed in irreligion, and estranged from the Church?

The rector of the parish evinces the deepest interest in this department of his work, but it would be utterly unreasonable to expect him, already overtasked, to give the time required to watch over the spiritual fluctuations of men who are striving to overcome long-cherished evil habits, and are endeavoring to resist the unholy influences of former companions. Even in such cases there is abundant encouragement, where the minister and the teacher, aided by the more stable members of the class, watch over these adult babes in Christ, and make them cordially welcome at appropriate public services in the Church.

PORTABLE FIRE EXTINGUISHER.

In Scripture, the devouring flame is used to illustrate the burning of lustful desires in the human heart when unrestrained by grace, and God's Word also testifies that the profane tongue is "set on fire of hell."

The fearful increase of licentiousness and profanity, and the alienation from God caused thereby, have induced many Christians to search prayerfully for some successful mode of applying the only antidote for moral and spiritual ills.

The "worldly wise" do not say that burning property is only to be saved by taking it to a stationary fire-engine, neither do they rest satisfied by conveying water through every street; the utmost powers of man are taxed to speed costly and powerful engines to each fire as soon as it is discovered. With all this cost of time and money, and of life also, it has become apparent that fires must be attacked

before they gain any headway, that commerce and manufactures be not checked by their increasing prevalence and destructiveness. The necessity for a better and more portable fire extinguisher has so stimulated the inventive faculty, that the following announcement has recently been made, and its truth proved to the entire satisfaction of the most skeptical. "THE PORTABLE FIRE EXTINGUISHER is always ready for use, it puts out fire instantly, is effective in the hands of inexperienced persons, possesses the power of a force-pump and is the only known invention that will extinguish burning oils of a very inflammable character." This apparatus consists of a small sheet-iron can, filled with water, into which two ingredients are introduced that generate carbonic acid gas, and forcibly eject this combination of gas and water in any direction that the carrier indicates.

The primitive Church freely used portable fire extinguishers, for it is written that all Christians of every age and condition (except the Apostles) "went everywhere preaching the word." In that day every human heart, when charged by the Holy Spirit with the love that was set free on Calvary, recognized its "stewardship of the manifold grace of God," and no more thought of exemption from personal service because of apostolic supervision and leadership than the soldier does because he is ably commanded. During the last seven years, several rectors and chaplains have fully tested the almost miraculous power of this primitive portable fire extinguisher, but they could not give public exhibitions, as the operators are refined, self-distrustful women, and their chief sphere of operation is in the homes of the working people or alone with the individual sinner. At the solicitation of Bishop Bedell, records of a few experiments made at four different points, by six Christian women, have been published in THE SPIRIT OF MISSIONS, already resulting in a demand for such trained

workers far beyond the supply, and also for specific information to aid in their training.

When each parish church returns to primitive usage, and engages in the preparation of all communicants for their legitimate work, infidelity will not have soil enough left to thrive in.

The benefits resulting to mothers and children from the recent use of this primitive agency, have caused men long under the blighting influence of infidelity, to ask if nothing was to be done for them. That inquiry has, under God's gracious guidance, wrought some of the greatest advantages to the working class that our Church has ever witnessed.

Inexperienced readers of the following paper will naturally ask why a poor woman was allowed to struggle so hard with insufficient clothing; the reply is, experience has proven that, with an intemperate husband, the last spark of self-respect must be cherished, or the result will be far worse than any present discomfort. W.

Dear Sir,—I have wondered much of late whether church-going Christian people ever consider what hinders persons in the humbler walks of life from coming within sound of the glad tidings of salvation, as officially proclaimed from the pulpit.

In my visits to the homes of some members of our mothers' meeting, I have learned to be very thankful for my religious privileges. I see their many trials and manifold cares, cares which have no lift-up, no let-go, night or day, and which confine them to one spot; often it is a home over which hang low and dark the mists of sin and ignorance, where at times poverty stands at the door and hunger sits on the hearth-stone. Still, it is their home,—the place where their little ones first opened their eyes to behold the light, and where perhaps one, whose voice still lingers

in the chambers of memory, may have been rocked to sleep for the last time.

Come with me to the home of one of the members of our mothers' meeting, and let us see her opportunities for attendance upon the regular services of God's house. We see a woman who was early trained in the Church; who at one time taught a Sunday-school class. At seventeen she married a laboring man, who, in good times, earned one dollar per day. Now, at the age of forty, they have nine children. The husband has never been more than he was at first, a common working man, getting employment here, there, and anywhere; and in dull times, for weeks, and sometimes months, he will have no work at all. They cannot starve; upon whom then falls the burden? The mother. To her housework and the care of her children she must add the labor of supporting them through these dull times. She must take in washing or go out and find work, perhaps in the mill,—a long day of toil with heart and mind upon those at home. At evening, and far into the night, the many little nameless things must be done, and many weary stitches be taken that the family may be as comfortable as possible. Is it strange when the one day of rest comes around, that this overworked mother should find it difficult to do else than sit about the door? Then, their narrow income barely finds them in what keeps body and soul together. How is the mother able to keep the little ones in shoes and in the plainest clothing, to appear decently habited in God's house or the Sunday-school? She provides for herself last, and it is indeed a slender provision. During the winter, for many years, she has worn but two garments, and neither of them warm. How can this mother receive instruction, how get that wisdom which we all so much need, without which, under the most favorable circumstances, we fail in our duty as wives and mothers? Add to all her other troubles, the wine cup which bites like

a serpent and stings like an adder. Perhaps you now withdraw much of your sympathy and are ready to exclaim, "Here, they are eating the fruit of their own gathering." I answer, "Nay, they are reaping the fruits of your negligence, fellow *Christian*, and of the coldness of the Christian Church." The precious gospel must be *carried to* these blind ones; we must show them how to arise from death that Christ may give them light. In this way the disciples of our Lord alone can fulfil his command: "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to *every* creature."

Our mothers' meeting has wrought after this manner, and God has abundantly blessed the efforts of those into whose hearts it entered, a few years ago, to *take* light and sunshine into the homes of our laboring people.

As I talked to a weary mother to-day, who had been out washing, and, instead of resting, was obliged to hold a fretful baby on her lap, I thought it was no wonder she had let many years roll on in entire neglect of her soul.

"Lizzie," I said, "are you coming to-night to mothers' meeting?" "Yes," she replied, "I hope to, for I am not fit to go to church; I have not been able to get a clean calico dress for a good while, and baby is so troublesome, I do not like to leave her with her father. I sometimes am frightened at the thought of how very little I know about things I ought to know, and yet, I cannot help it." I replied, "Lizzie, it is a sweet comfort to know that God does not exact more of his children than they can do. I do not want you to relax your efforts to get to church on Sunday, but if you will come to mothers' meeting and join in the worship there, and if you will have prayers at home and teach the children, and send as many of them as you can to Sunday-school, God will not forget you in your low estate. Let me read you one of his promises: 'Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servants, that walketh in darkness and hath no light?

Let *him trust* in the name of the Lord and stay upon his God.'" "Oh, I do now try to trust, but I am often tempted to give up and live in my old, ugly disposition; when I feel this way I look back to the time when I first put on my hood and shawl and went to mothers' meeting. That was a good night for my soul. Your prayers with us and the books you have left with us, have helped us many times. We talk, grandmother and I, of your lessons when you are gone, and say we will try and look to God again." "Do you still have family prayers, Lizzie?" I inquired. "No, not often when Henry is with us," she replied; "he will not be steady, but I bring the children around me, sometimes we sing and all pray, even little Tody here says, 'God bless the lady mamma likes.'" "Lizzie, you were taught to pray when a child?" "Ah! yes, indeed I was." And tears stole down this poor woman's face as memory recalled a love not to be forgotten, and words spoken by a mother. She was trying to grope her way back to her Father's arms, but *how is this feeble longing after a better life to gain strength when she is immersed in sin and ignorance?*

We study God's word to be guided,—*we* go to God's house to be instructed and to engage in its beautiful service for our souls' growth. But this poor woman of whom I speak must remain at home; there, are her children; there, her duties claim her presence; and if, perchance, she could leave these, she could seldom be fitly clad to go into God's house. Or perhaps she is wearied and out of spirit, for all the night before she had watched and waited the return of her husband, who now lies in a drunken sleep. Christ came into the world to bring life and immortality to light, and to Christians He has said, "Let your *light shine.*" "Go preach the gospel to *every* creature."

When we go out from our pleasant dwellings, passing by the door of our less favored sisters, shall we forget that Jesus bids us "To open the blind eyes, to bring out the

prisoners from the prison, and them that *sit in darkness* out of the prison house"?

One mother said to me, "What a blessing I have found the mothers' meeting to be! I have lived in spiritual coldness for years, though once a regular communicant." Here another fact presents itself which should awaken us to our obligations, *the duty we owe Christ's scattered sheep.* The people in that class of life are a floating population. Owing to the fluctuations in trade, they are driven from town to town, often from State to State; and, not a few, from one country to another. The American people understand the word emigration from practical experience of its meaning. This woman of whom I speak, had changed her residence six times since her marriage,—each time traveling over the country hundreds, sometimes thousands of miles. Her husband was an irreligious man, and when, soon after their marriage, she spoke to him about their obligations to God, he was much vexed with her. At the time I spoke to her, she had four children; cares had accumulated, and coming into a new place where she saw no one that she knew, she had gradually got into the habit of not going beyond her own door. When I first visited her, the youngest child had not been baptized, because she felt so *strange and alone* in the church. She had gone there several times, but no one spoke to her, and she returned to her home after each service feeling lonely, and not anxious to pass through the same experience on the following Sunday. But the mothers' meeting made her acquainted with many about the church. The lady Principal had instructed her as to her duty to her child, and now she only waited to hear announced the day for infant baptism. She was very happy on Thursday evenings, when she had an opportunity to run from home, in her working clothes, wrapping up baby to take him with her,—to sing again the hymns of her childhood. There she read and sang the same dear words

which (tossed about in America as she had been so long) she had begun to think she would never sing again with a light heart.

"Oh," she remarked on one occasion, "if this would only be done for us everywhere we go, how many of us would do better! Every third Friday I look for you to come, and sometimes wonder if you will just hit on what I want."

"Why, Mary," I replied, "why do you not tell me what you want, what you would like me to read or talk about, or pray for?"

"Oh, there is often no use; last time you were here, I felt so dead and couldn't pray. Don't you know what you read to me?"

"No," I replied, "I do not, I have read so much since."

"You read, 'Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation.' You told me how David mourned over his separation from God, how weary he was apart from God; how, if a little lamb wandered out of the fold, pitiful indeed was its cry. I felt then just like that sheep, and I prayed that prayer of David, and God did give me joy again. It is so happy to know that Mrs. —— and you will not forget us. My husband never would go to church before, and now he comes from Mrs. ——'s Bible-class and talks her lessons all over on Sunday evening. He told me he would not go to that class, but Mrs. —— has turned him right 'round. He laughed about being shut up in a corner and made to say *yes*. He reads the Bible, and does not find so much fault with it as he used to."

"You told me, Mary, that his violent temper was hard to bear with at times."

"Well, I have tried not to notice it; I know he does not really mean unkindness, and if he gets to be a Christian, I know God will help him to overcome it."

Another woman who came to this country, went once to

our church, and because all seemed so indifferent and cold, she determined to go to the Methodists; and did go, and continued going up to the time she was visited by a lady from the mothers' meeting. She was delighted with the mothers' meeting. I asked her to go to our free service, where she would be cordially welcomed. She tried it, and has over and over again regretted that she ever strayed away from her Church, and is thankful to those who would take so much trouble as to come *into her house* and *urge* her to go with her children to worship. Sometimes this gentle, earnest woman, so easily led in the right way, says to me, "Read until you feel tired, I have so little time. I snatch up the Bible (for I keep it handy now, I won't let it be far away) and just read a word sometimes; but when you come, then I think I shall hear so much, I shall learn another good lesson. Oh, Mrs.——, you cannot tell how rested it makes me! I stop all work and forget all care, and when you are gone, I say, that was a blessing, if I cannot get out much, I shall learn in this way."

For a long time I made it a point with a few of my women who leaned upon me very much for instruction, to try to be at their houses on the same day of the week each month, because they looked forward to it, and dwelt upon the pleasure of seeing me, and this was a little bright spot to them. We all know what pleasure there is in anticipation. One woman always met me at the door, bright and happy. One day she said, "I have been singing, so the time would pass soon. I did not get to mothers' meeting last night. John went out, and I would not leave the children, and I was so disappointed, for it is the only time I leave home. Wasn't it selfish in John, Mrs. ——?"

"Well," I replied, "I do not know what took him out, —at all events, I hope you did not tell him he was selfish?"

"I told him he was mean to take my night merely to hear a Mason speak."

"That may not occur again for a long time," I said. "Perhaps he might have thought *you* selfish, to want to deprive him of that relaxation, after his hard day's work. Remember a wife is expected to be unselfish, Eliza; some husbands will never stay at home with the children."

"But I was so disappointed."

"I have no doubt," I said, "but you know Mrs. —— tells us mothers' meeting should make us all better wives and mothers. Your husband will not think much of our meeting, if, in anywise through it, he finds you less patient or less willing to sacrifice your personal gratification for your family; and then, Eliza, you know you will have to remain at home. You do not wish to quarrel with your husband, and is it not better to submit cheerfully? for that keeps him in a good humor, and saves you a vast deal of unhappiness. If my husband is dissatisfied with me from any cause, I always feel uncomfortable, and I suppose in this all wives are alike."

"Now, I see you know all about it, you are right," she replied. "John was angry with me, and I wished this morning I had just kept quiet, for neither of us had a cheerful breakfast. I will remember and do as you say next time. I'll just say, 'John, go,' and I will help him off."

I remarked that I tried to visit some on the same day of the month, but there are others whom it is well to come upon unawares,—those whom you desire to instruct in tidiness or neatness, or who are noisy and quarrelsome. I have sometimes quietly opened a door and looked in upon mother, daughter, and granddaughter in the midst of an angry dispute, in the heat of the moment ready to strike each other. If I am well known and loved by the family, I am glad to come at such a time. I cautiously refrain from taking the side of either; but when they are calm, show them how frail we all are by nature, and that God, knowing our frailties, sent his only Son to bear these, our

infirmities, and offer us his strength. I have one woman whose hot temper often makes all about her very miserable. On one occasion I visited her house when she had put her husband's mother out-of-doors. She told me freely all she had done, and added, "I am ashamed to let you know, but I will not hide it, for you know all my troubles." I opened the Bible and read, "He was bruised for our iniquities." "All we like sheep have gone astray." She was melted into tears, and said, "Oh, how wicked I am! will God forgive me, for Christ's sake? I wanted you to come. I thought you could say something to help me. I could not go to church, and it seemed so gloomy everywhere."

I said, "Margaret, if we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us. You must humble yourself under the mighty hand of God." I wanted to see how far her sorrow was a godly sorrow. I said, "What of grandmother,—have you confessed your fault to her?" "No, she is next door, and will not speak to me," she replied. "I am not surprised, for it requires considerable grace to speak to one who has turned us out-of-doors. Will you go and ask her to come home?" "Yes, if you will go with me." We stepped to the door, I called grandmother, and we all went into Margaret's house. I prayed with them, and left them reconciled, each feeling her own share of the sin. Thus, practically, must we teach these people. Line upon line, must the instruction be given in homes such as these, and in their *homes alone* can it be done, and by one who knows all the family failings and difficulties,—by one who can sympathize with a mother in her daily and hourly vexations,—one who has also struggled against similar infirmities; or who, at least, is anxious for their soul's good, and for their happiness. Such persons as the above (and our parishes, and cities, and towns are crowded with them) are cut off from the privileges of the Christian Church, by the

force of circumstances. Again, there are others who are ignorant of the ways of our beautiful Zion, because of their early training and prejudices. For instance, I have had under my care a woman who had been, when quite a child, placed in a family of Friends, who understood, "Keep holy the Sabbath-day," to consist in a quiet and cleanly house. Accordingly, all the fifteen years of her married life she had attired herself on God's day in her neat, plain gown, and had all the family behave in a very proper and friendly way.

It was months before I could talk her out of her very strong prejudices against our liturgy. She came to the mothers' meeting, and her regular and orderly training made her a very constant attendant. Then I got her to go to the free service and the afternoon Bible-class. These she liked very much, and gradually became interested in the Church; yet held to her own notion that all form was unnecessary, and that the still, small voice must be the guide of our lives. I admitted the power and blessing of that faithful monitor, but asked her one day, "Caroline, whilst you listen to and obey the voice, you also understand that God sent his Son into this world and called Him Counselor. We follow the advice and direction of one who counsels us. He said repent and be *baptized.*" "But I think that is a spiritual baptism," was her reply. "If Christ had intended only the inward cleansing, do you think He would have set us the example by being himself baptized in Jordan? Christ also said we must let the world see our light, not hide it. If you believe in the Son of God, why not let the world, lying in sin and darkness, know it, and perhaps thereby lead others who do not believe at all, to think of and seek 'the way to heaven'?" "Well, Mrs.——, I should like to know more and hear more, for I am a poor reader myself." "Caroline, will you go and talk to our pastor? You will find him very kind." I knew this was

asking much, for she was of a very sensitive, shrinking disposition. She flatly refused; saying, for me she could do a great deal, but to go and talk to a *minister* about herself, she could not; she thought she could be good at home.

Thus matters remained for some time. I visited her constantly, read with her, admired her very, very cleanly house, asked her at times for a piece of bread, when I was hungry and tired from too long walking. It could be eaten with an appetite, for everything about her looked so clean and comfortable. A nice, bright stove, spotless carpet, clean windows, door-sills, porch, and bricks looking as though water had but just dried upon them. It pleased her very much when I sat down and ate anything she so cheerfully prepared. In this way we got very intimate. She told me all her troubles and her life changes, and at every visit requested me to read to her. God gave the increase in his own good time. Though it was to smite, it was also to bind up. Her eldest son, a boy of eleven years, was suddenly taken from her. During this affliction, she learned that "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him, and that He will show them his covenant." It was hard for her to make known the state of her mind to the rector, but she could tell her visitor anything. I promised to go with her; she wanted me to promise to stay by her and talk for her, as I knew all about her. I knew I could not do that, but at length took her into the rector's room, introduced and left her. She was an entire stranger to him. The deacon had visited her during her affliction; the superintendent of the Sunday-school had called on her twice, and the Principal of our mothers' meeting, often; but apart from these, she was a stranger in our church, both to minister and people. The rector was pleased with her simple trust in the Saviour, and deemed her prepared for baptism. I spent some time in explaining the liturgy and ordinances of the Church. It was a happy day when I

stood with her, a witness of the surrender of her soul unto God; through repentance and baptism made a member of Christ, united to his visible Church, thereafter to be a partaker of its high and blessed privileges.

This is one instance of a very large number of persons brought under my observation, who, not purposely, but ignorantly remain outside of the gate of the Temple.

Who is to blame that this woman was so long cut off from the ordinances of the Church? and that others like her do not drink of the river of life, and are not praising God in his Holy Church? The white field waits for the reapers. Christ said, "Gather with me." The sickle will not move when the reaper stays his stand. As Abraham entreated for the cities of the plain, so let us, as individual followers of the Lord Jesus, labor and intercede for those lying in darkness at our very doors.

A family moved into our town some time since, the father having a high position in one of the factories. They were far above the general class of people we visit. I was in the habit of going through the mill; and, on one occasion, seeing the son of the person I speak of, a lad of sixteen, I used him to gain an acquaintance with the family; and asked him to join a class of young men at the church. I was introduced to the father, who urged the son to comply with my request, saying, "I do not often go to any place of worship myself, yet still I like my family to go." I inquired after the family, and found they had a babe born on the same day as my own. I playfully called them twins, and received an invitation to come and see it; this being what I wanted, of course I thanked him and promised to do so. I went, found the mother pleasant and kind, the little ones unusually attractive. With them lived the grandparents on both sides. They were English, and had a birthright in the Church. One grandmother was a communicant, her husband a backslider. The other old people were both

living in an entirely careless manner; the man was an habitual drunkard; the woman very ignorant; unable to read or write, and caring for nothing beyond her daughter's family. The mother had often been led by the Spirit to long after a higher life, but the cares of her large family and the effect of early influences, kept her, as it were, bound hand and foot. The father, a handsome, intelligent, gentlemanly man, had failed to see anything beautiful in the holy gospel, was a good father and faithful husband, but had withheld from his family the untold blessing of a family altar. From early, pernicious influences he had almost learned to dislike the name of religion. By them I was introduced to a brother, his wife and family, who also had come into the village to live, none of them church-goers. Most of the children had been baptized. I urged upon them to bring the baby to baptism, and persuaded the brother and wife that they had neglected a solemn duty to their children. After a few weeks the three were baptized. One grandfather I could do but little with; the superintendent of our Sunday-school got hold of him one Sunday morning, and, as he said, hugged him into the church. He kept him talking as they walked through the street, and getting him to the church gate, beguiled him in; the first time he had been to church for over *twenty* years. His wife was not easily influenced, almost always left the room when I went there; but her daughter was quickly made to think about her duty. She got soon into the way of coming regularly to church, became deeply anxious about herself, and is now a regular communicant. The drunkard was aroused, and remained steady for a year; he also connected himself with the church, but has since fallen away. I saw him lately, and found him in a softened state, bemoaning the long habit of drink which had grown so strong upon him. Poor old man! We know little how hard it must be to overcome a vice that has been gaining strength for

over forty years. He said, "God knows I am sinful and weak; I love Him for all that. It hurts me to hear the name of the Saviour spoken against,—if I could but get away from this drink."

His wife became suddenly paralyzed; this aroused her from her apathy. She clung to me when I went to see her, told me how she had forgotten God. I taught her like a little child; told her stories, read her the parables and explained them, as to one feeble in body and mind, as she truly was. When I read to her of the sufferings of our Redeemer, she would clasp her hands and sob at the thought, saying, "Oh, how cruel! He is so good; I do love Him; I wish I had begun long ago." She was truly penitent. We took her in a carriage to church for confirmation; that was the only time she was there, she grew very feeble; is now at rest, having died in the full assurance of acceptance through the blood of the Son of God.

The last time I saw her, shortly before her death, she said, "I have no wish but what God wishes; I pray all the time." Pressing my hand feebly, she continued, "When I am gone, think, for your comfort, that I should not have loved the blessed Saviour had you not come and told me about Him. I die, knowing He will be with me in the hour I need Him most."

The other grandfather, who had backslidden, returned to the Church, and is now communing regularly.

This family furnishes another illustration of the fact, that by primitive house-to-house visiting and prayerful perseverance, very many may be reached who from untoward circumstances, force of habit, or pernicious early teaching, glide down life's stream wholly engrossed by the things of time, and remain sadly ignorant of the ways of God in man's salvation.

THE GREAT EASTERN.

MAN's efforts to employ this leviathan steamer profitably in carrying those only who could pay their passage, having repeatedly failed, it now seems as if *God* had designed her for higher and nobler purposes. It is true that the dimensions of the Great Eastern, being similar to those of Noah's Ark, she had already rendered good service to some students of the Bible by verifying that early type of the Church, but she will perform a still higher service, if the Christian Church takes warning from the unsuccessful efforts to employ this noble steamer in carrying rich passengers merely, when her high mission was to seek and save the lost bond of union between two worlds. Seeking and saving the lost money, the lost sheep, and even the lost Publican, are less startling, than seeking and saving a lost thread, buried miles deep in the trackless ocean. Such a search seemed like presumption; but it was undertaken intelligently and in faith, as every appliance was provided that practical experience or scientific skill could devise; no idlers were allowed; every soul on board, from the commander down, being equally intent on the one great aim.

When, after many delays and disappointments, the grapnel found the lost cable and gently lifted it to the water's surface; when the agile sailors were lowered to secure it; when skilful mechanics welded it to its fellow, and when the man of science tested its vitality by sending the life current through it to the mother land, there was no place for envy in any breast; all were jubilant with a joy that was heightened by their vexatious delays and disappointments.

Our mother Church, by reason of her alliance with the state, lost sight of her simple gospel mission, and, whilst repudiating the sale of indulgences, she hired out reserved

seats in churches, and made social distinctions more marked in God's house than in either the political or commercial world. The Rev. R. Gregory gave the following illustration of the natural result of that system, in his speech at the recent Church Congress, composed of Bishops, Presbyters, and Laymen: "The calculation is that not one in fifty of the workingmen, on the south side of the Thames, are found in any place of worship at all." He adds this sentence that is replete with dearly-bought wisdom: "To give alms (to men) fails to attach them to the giver; the reception of alms degrades them in their own eyes, and although at the moment they are grateful to the donor, alms-giving in the long run fails to have the effect we are in the habit of attributing to it. We must therefore start from some other point, so as to convince them that we really sympathize with them."

The scriptural proverb, "As is the mother, so is her daughter," is, in this case, lamentably true; but both mother and daughter (like the Great Eastern before her successful cruise) are being prepared to start afresh on their true mission. With what deep interest every form of grapnel is now examined and prepared for use! The duly-appointed commanders now welcome with heartfelt joy the humblest helpers as the gift of God; and they join the more favored, who sustain the Church by renting pews, not only to aid their ministers in seeking the lost, but also to welcome them into God's house just as cordially as the tradesman or even the publican welcomes them into his shop. The following brief extract from a private log-book, reveals some of the hidden working by which great successes have already been wrought by spiritual grapnels and other appliances too long neglected by the Church. W.

While visiting one day, a member of our mothers' meeting told me of Mrs. S——, who had been nursing her, and

said, "I wish you would go to see her; she has had a great deal of trouble. I told her I was sure you would go." A few days afterwards I called to see her. She had been a member of a religious body, but several years before, when she was in trouble, none of the members of that body came to see her, she felt neglected and alone, stayed away from church, and had grown careless. Her husband was in a consumption, but worked occasionally when he was able. Her daughter, a delicate girl, was in the mill, and she herself was obliged to go out nursing, in order to keep up their little home. I talked to her about herself, and found that she was very unhappy at living apart from her Saviour. When I prayed for her she was completely broken down, and remained upon her knees sobbing. She felt that she had wandered too far from God to be forgiven. I read to her the promises. Hope gradually dawned upon her soul, and she thanked God that He had sent some one to draw her back into the path from which she had so long strayed. As the way was not new to her, she advanced rapidly in the Christian life. She joined our mothers' meeting, and attended church regularly. In a few months our minister admitted her to the holy communion; and when the Bishop came she was confirmed. Sometimes, other members of the mothers' meeting speak to her playfully of her great love for me; and on one of these occasions she seized my hand, and, with tears in her eyes, said "How could I help loving you when you brought me back to my Saviour!" Indeed, her grateful love humbles me, for she calls me teacher, while I really sit at her feet and learn of her.

She became extremely anxious about her husband, who was entirely indifferent in regard to religious subjects. When together we used to pray for him. She begged me to come when he was at home alone, and talk to him. At first I seldom saw him; but as his disease progressed, and he was confined more to the house, I learned to know him

better. He was a very quiet, reserved man, and it was hard to discover his thoughts or feelings on any subject. His wife gave up nursing, and went out to work by the day, so that she could be with him every evening. As he could not read, his days were very lonely while his wife and daughter were both away at work; and I went as often as I could to read to him. He said very little, but his wife told me he loved the reading, and was very much disappointed if more than the usual number of days passed without my going there. One day, after our reading, he said, "I now trust entirely in my Saviour, and feel sure that He will never leave me." These few words from him were more than many sentences from most people. His favorite hymns were read to him every day, and often several times over. He suffered much, and often could not lie down at all; but he was always patient and never uttered a complaint. His wife strove faithfully and earnestly to lead him on in the right way. It was wonderful how much time she found to read to him. Every morning many things had to be done for his comfort during the day, and then her house-work had all to be done when she came home at night; yet she was never so much hurried in the morning as to omit the family devotions, and never too weary at night for the accustomed chapter and prayers. Great was her joy when she became convinced that her husband was resting his hope of salvation simply on the merits of our dear Lord.

She steadily manifests a deep and lively interest in the spiritual welfare of her friends and neighbors; and several of them have told me of her many earnest talks with them. Every little tract or book which she receives, is given away with a fervent prayer that it may be blessed to the reader. She often mourns that she cannot do more; and yet I know none who, in proportion to their talents and opportunities, do as much as she does. She is very much interested in the scholars belonging to my large Bible-class, and for a

long time has been in the habit of praying daily, not only for the whole class, but specially for several members of it. She said one day, "I never see any of those boys come into church without lifting up my heart in prayer to God that they may receive a blessing."

Though very poor, they are such independent people that I never liked to offer them any assistance. Last winter, shortly before the death of Mr. S——, the weather was extremely cold, and their little worn-out stove was entirely insufficient to keep their kitchen at all comfortable,—poor S—— would sit over it shivering and looking so cold. I mentioned this to a friend, who sent to their house a better stove, without anything having been said to them about it, or probably they would have been unwilling to accept it. Just after this I was absent from the parish for several days, and on my return learned that S—— had died, quite suddenly, early that very morning. I hastened to the house and found Mrs. S—— in deep but chastened sorrow, and also full of gratitude because she felt sure that her husband was at rest in Paradise, and because he had not died when she was out at her daily work. "Oh, Miss Y——," she exclaimed, "if you had only been here!—he wanted to see you so much; but he left good-by for you, and said, 'Tell her I hope to meet her in heaven.'" We went up-stairs together, and knelt in prayer beside her husband who seemed smiling peacefully even in death. We thanked God that He had heard and answered all our prayers, and had spared his life until he learned to trust entirely in our blessed Redeemer. I came away feeling, indeed, that "it is better to go to the house of mourning than to go to the house of feasting."

She said to me afterwards, "Oh, Miss Y——, that stove,—if you could only have seen what a comfort it was to my husband! When the man brought it, we told him he had come to the wrong place; but he showed us the number of

our house on a piece of paper, and said he knew he was right. Then we both said that you, in some way, had sent it, and we prayed God to bless you for it. We watched the man take the old one down, and the pipe and stove fell to pieces in his hands. Husband and I looked at one another; we had both been thinking about this for a long time. We each knew the pipe was all worn out, but as we could not get a new one, we had not liked to speak to each other about it. He was so grateful, and said God sent him everything he wanted."

The widow was resolved to pay her husband's funeral expenses. She said she and her daughter had been talking about it, and they wanted to pay them. They could not bear the idea of neighbors taking up a collection for them, therefore they borrowed the money, and have been paying it back in small sums.

I learned that S——, who was the most reserved man I have ever known, although so young in the faith, had been talking to one of his neighbors on the subject of religion.

Mrs. S—— is never absent from the mothers' meeting. She says it rests her after a hard day's work; and she may always be seen quietly seating herself beside the loneliest, saddest-looking, or the most despised woman in the room, cheering her loneliness, sympathizing with her in her troubles, or pointing her to the Saviour.

St. James says, "Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the Kingdom which He hath promised to them that love Him? but ye have despised the poor." The great Apostle to the Gentiles felt that he received his motive power through the prayers of just such. He cried, "Brethren, pray for us that the word of the Lord may have free course and be glorified. Brethren, pray for us. Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving, withal,

praying also for us, that God would open to us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ."

People who do not understand the nature of the work in which we are engaged often express astonishment that we do so much, but if they could see the helps we have from the prayers and tender personal efforts of others, they would perhaps be amazed that we effect so little. Our helpers draw many within our reach, whom, otherwise, we should fail to influence for good.

LIFE INSURANCE.

Mutual life insurance companies have of late rapidly increased in number, and their business has more than doubled within two years. This modern institution, the offspring of Christian civilization, should be thoroughly examined by religious teachers, for where it is intelligently and honestly conducted, it successfully embodies some of the most important practical principles of the Church, as described in the Gospels and Epistles. It is a real brotherhood in which the strong support the weak; its organization is complete, therefore its operations are orderly and can be safely and indefinitely extended, and as it works on a principle, without being fettered by traditional usages, it is intensely aggressive.

The sagacious men who conduct some of these associations are thorough students of the Bible and of human nature in all its phases; they know full well that whilst "doctrines or the things that are believed, are the principles of action, emotions or the things that are felt are the impellant forces." Although these associations spend nearly half a million of dollars annually in printing dissertations

on the principles of life insurance and its advantages, yet success is alone attained by the persistent personal persuasion of men trained to investigate, and to follow up each case separately, until the act of committal is consummated.

The success of this mode of influencing men by persuasive power is complete; for, within three years, forty-three companies have insured the lives of two hundred and thirteen thousand persons for over six hundred millions of dollars. Although the business is in its infancy, yet more than ten thousand of these personal persuaders or solicitors, as they are called, are now successfully employed; and it is expected that through their agency the lives of at least one hundred and fifty thousand persons will be insured this year (1867).

Self-interest suffices to induce a man to insure his property against losses by fire and flood, but it is no easy task to persuade a stranger, contrary to his natural disposition, to consider the uncertainty of life and the certainty of his own death, and to yield to the silent pleadings of love, so as to restrain present self-indulgence and provide for the future of others, by paying annually a premium for insuring his life.

As the power of personal persuasion even when used by persons acting merely from self-interest and without invoking the Holy Spirit's aid, brings the higher nature of fallen man into healthful exercise, what a fearful responsibility rests on all who possess the Spirit of Christ and have intelligence and the gift of speech! The Book of Proverbs asserts that "death and life are in the power of the tongue;" the death-power of the tongue is freely used by very many at the instigation of the Evil One, but the silence of most Christians is criminal, for the aid of the Holy Spirit is pledged to develop in them this life-power and to direct them in its exercise. Surely those solicitors for life insurance have swept away all the specious pleas under which

man usually tries to justify himself for allowing the weaker or less favored to perish eternally, and the following record of persuasion by a modest, self-distrustful woman should encourage and incite all to do likewise in private, where this power is possessed by every one, although few can become public orators. W.

It was in the autumn of 1861 that I first entered the wards of a military hospital. The long rows of beds, on each one of which lay a human being, suffering either from sickness or wounds, presented a melancholy spectacle, and a sad evidence of the horrors of war.

Here, then, was the opportunity so ardently desired since the breaking out of the war, of ministering to the physical and spiritual necessities of the sick and wounded soldiers. Entering heartily upon the work, I soon found that opportunities for alleviating physical suffering were very limited, being mostly confined to the supply of delicacies; but I was permitted free access to the bedsides of the patients for the purpose of imparting religious instruction, and of this privilege from that time, I daily availed myself. The work was soon systematized, for other ladies joined me, each taking one ward or floor of the hospital, containing one hundred and ten beds, and confining her labors to that ward.

We began by going from bed to bed, giving to each patient a tract, asking a few questions expressive of kindly sympathy, inquiring into his wants, and concluding with the expressed hope that the tenderly sympathizing Saviour was his friend and comforter in the hour of trial. The reply, of course, enabled us to judge of the spiritual condition of the patient, and suggested either earnest words of warning and entreaty to turn at once to this merciful Saviour as the sinner's only refuge and hope, or to throw out that electric spark which tells that we are "one in Christ Jesus."

Such conversations were generally followed by prayer if the least favorable impression seemed to have been made. Subsequent visits were devoted to reading some portion of Scripture, with a simple explanation in which I tried to press home upon the conscience practical lessons, or to conversation based on some book or tract which had been left for perusal. Generally, confidence was soon gained. We had reason to hope that these efforts were blessed of God, but how far the last day alone can reveal, for we could not follow up the impressions made, as the men were sent home on furlough as soon as they were able to travel, and returned no more to the hospital. From many of them we received most encouraging letters, and many of those who died expressed a firm trust in the beloved Saviour.

Then came the transfer to another hospital, where, for the first month, our duties were so largely secular, and those to whom we ministered were in such a fearful state of exhaustion and suffering, that we could only watch for opportunities when the pain was somewhat lulled and the faculties sufficiently awakened for us, in a few whispered words, to point the poor sufferer to "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world," or, having soothed his spirit by expressions of tender sympathy, and bathed his aching brow, to bend over him, and, in a brief prayer, endeavor to lift his soul to Him who for his sake hung in agony and shame upon the cross. Death made sad havoc among these poor men, and soon left many of their beds vacant.

Their places were filled by convalescents, and then came the most difficult and trying part of my hospital experience. I had been accustomed, in visiting the poor, to speak earnestly and pointedly to them on the subject of personal religion, and had habitually prayed with the sick and afflicted, but to deal thus with these men, to question them about their spiritual condition, to exhort them to repent and believe, seemed, indeed, a great task. I shrank from

the responsibility, and feared, moreover, that the subject would be not only unwelcome, but offensive to those whom I should address; but, from a strong sense of duty and through prayer, I was enabled to undertake the work. I tried to make myself acquainted with the character and circumstances, the home relations and army experience, the former and present religious status of each man in my ward. I had it in my power to supply many comforts and delicacies, and obtain many favors for the men, which, of course, ingratiated me with them, and made them more willing to listen to the message which I brought. Supposed favorable impressions were always followed up by reading to them, or inducing them to read religious books.

It was on a Sunday, in the fall of 1862, that, after many struggles and much prayer, I held my first Bible-class in the hospital; there were five men present, and as I sat before them Bible in hand, I trembled so violently that I could hardly speak.

But God was pleased to bless these feeble and imperfect efforts, and my heart was soon cheered by two of the men presenting themselves as candidates for baptism. I had many private interviews for conversation and prayer with them; and, for their benefit and that of a few others who were thinking seriously, commenced a week-day class on the Catechism; this was so well attended that after a brief course of catechetical instruction, I concluded to turn it into a daily Bible-class, and throw it open to all. This was kept up with an average attendance of twenty-five out of about one hundred and twenty-five patients, and with most encouraging results. At the end of six months from the organization of my class, that hospital was closed, and I was transferred to another.

Here work was undertaken under more discouraging circumstances. I had no acquaintance with the surgeons of the wards, had no defined position, no opportunity for re-

lieving the temporal necessities of the men, and was unknown to most of them. At last, however, after three months' waiting, Bible-classes were organized, and from that date I trace the commencement of efficient work at this hospital. Our plan was to visit the patients in the wards, to have direct and pointed religious conversation with each one, to urge upon them the importance of personal religion, to speak to them of the shortness and uncertainty of life, and of the great love and mercy of God in providing salvation for sinful men. In this way the most important subjects were brought home to the individual conscience. They were next induced to attend the Bible-class: every absence was noted, religious books were put into their hands and religious conversation held with them. They were invited to our sanctum, letters from absent comrades were read to them. Thus their confidence was secured, and opportunities were gained for religious conversations adapted to the peculiarities of each, in which, either by argument, persuasion, warning, or entreaty, the duties and responsibilities of life were presented, and an earnest effort made to induce the listener to promise to begin the Christian life. The promise was sometimes given, seldom utterly refused, but the proposition was always made by us that each one should pray that God would either confirm the resolution already made, or give them strength to make it without delay. Many and many a man has risen from his knees, after that first prayer, with the tears streaming from his eyes, has shaken my hand and said, "I *will* try to be a Christian; I promise you."

But this was only the inauguration of the work; this first step taken, there was need of the greatest tenderness, watchfulness, and perseverance, with constant prayer. The delicate plant may easily be chilled, and droop, and die.

This beginning of religious interest was kept up by fre-

quent private interviews, in which encouragement and instruction were given. We found much fanaticism, many erroneous views of gospel truth, a strong disposition to seek for peace rather pardon, to put feeling in the place of Christ, to look for a sudden assurance of sins forgiven, and in many other ways to overlook the finished work of redemption, and the fact that "whosoever *will*," may "come and buy wine and milk, without money and without price."

There was also very generally a severe struggle before the young disciple could bring himself to the point of openly kneeling in prayer by his bedside. We always urged it very strongly, unless there appeared to be danger of thus "breaking the bruised reed or quenching the smoking flax." Few could long resist appeals to the heart presenting the self-sacrificing love of Christ and his suffering for us upon the cross, and when these appeals were followed up by the solemn asseveration of the Saviour, that those who "will not confess Him before men shall not be confessed by Him before his Father and the holy angels," a promise was generally given, and the effort made, and prayer offered, kneeling in the midst of what the individual felt would be surprised looks, taunts, and sneers from those who had long known him as a drunkard, a swearer, indifferent and callous, or wild and reckless. On the next day when the question was asked, "Did you kneel?" there was almost invariably a bright smile as the glad "yes" was uttered, followed by, "I hardly think I could have done it, but I knew you were praying for me, and that thought gave me courage."

When a steady and increasing interest was shown, together with earnestness and sincerity, the great question of baptism soon came up, sooner, perhaps, than it would under ordinary circumstances, for we felt it to be extremely important in order to give firmness and strength to the religious character, that a decided stand should be

taken, and an open confession of Christ made in the midst of the temptations of a hospital, and to give strength for the temptations of army life. Then followed a course of instruction preparatory to baptism, based upon the Church Catechism, made throughout as practical as possible, and brought home, step by step, to the heart and conscience of the catechumen. The docility of these men was amazing; they sat at our feet and listened to our teachings in the spirit of little children, and obeyed our slightest suggestion as if it had been a "general order." In the catechism, the whole round of Christian doctrine came under notice, and every phase of Christian character and experience was reached. In these repeated private interviews we gradually became well acquainted with the peculiarities of each one, peculiarities of training, character, thought, etc., and adapted our teaching to the needs of each. The solemn vows of baptism made, Christ confessed, the world renounced, and the young volunteer fully enlisted, we felt that much had been done, and thanked God that we had been permitted to have any part in the good work.

The habit of close personal oversight was kept up as long as the young Christians remained within reach, which, in some cases, was more than a year. Frequent interviews were had, to do what might be done, to prevent the coming in of coldness and declension. The best safeguard against danger of this sort was found to be immediate and earnest entrance upon some Christian work, such as reading to or conversing with others on the subject of personal religion.

I felt more and more every day the absolute necessity for this continued watchfulness, examination, instruction, and guidance, long, very long, after the Christian profession had been made; otherwise, many a promising disciple would have made shipwreck of his faith. The same kind of oversight is still to some extent kept up with the absent ones by the frequent interchange of letters.

The result of my experience in two and a half years of this kind of work has been most encouraging. I find in many, I may say in most men, no aversion to conversation on the subject of religion; on the contrary, there is a readiness to acknowledge its value, and a degree of impressibility which have greatly surprised me. Some whom I have known have been in the habit of going to church as a mere form, with the idea of "getting religion" at a revival-meeting; that is, if they have ever thought anything at all about it. With others, these revivals and their results have completely shaken confidence in the reality of religion, or have led them to steel their hearts against serious impressions. They are not to be "frightened into religion." The lukewarmness and worldliness of many army chaplains and the frequent backslidings of professing Christians had also a most injurious effect. Yet, notwithstanding all these obstacles, kindness and sympathy, or interest shown in men's trials and temptations, and persevering efforts to instruct them and lead them to the Saviour, generally produced the best effect.

"My word shall not return unto me void," is God's own promise. Now, whilst we fully expect its fulfillment, should we do so, not with folded hands, but with the kind of faith shown by the diligent husbandman, who, in sowing the seed, uses every art and improvement to insure a good and bountiful harvest.

APPROACHES TO THE IRRELIGIOUS.

Modes of *hostile* approach have been fully discussed in many elaborate treatises on the art of war; but very little has been taught or written on the best modes of *friendly* approach to men who are living in opposition to religion, or in indifference to its claims. Comparatively few men

of this class are brought within the range of the pulpit, or are savingly influenced by the less formal public preaching; therefore the best modes of privately approaching and favorably influencing such minds and hearts should be carefully studied.

It is lamentably true that many members of the Church justify themselves for narrowing their responsibilities, by asking, "Who is my neighbor?" but there are also many who possess the Spirit of Christ so largely that they are yearning to learn how they can "win souls."

The following paper was elicited by a bishop who was an eye-witness of remarkable success in varied fields, by cultivated women of widely dissimilar characteristics. He desired to incite others to work for Christ, by showing the modes of approach that had been so fully tested under his own observation. In a military hospital, approaches to the irreligious seem to be easy, because men are within reach of their teacher, but it is found that the successful winner of souls there, has in every case been equally successful in parochial and missionary work. The men in the hospital soon learned that these women did not come to please themselves, but to benefit others, and in proportion to the seeming sacrifice was their power.

This principle was forcibly illustrated last winter by one of them when collecting a Bible-class of workingmen in a difficult suburban mission. On the memorable Thursday afternoon in January, suitably escorted, she visited certain manufactories and machine-shops where some men worked whose families she knew. The fearful snow-drifts housed all seekers of pleasure, and even defied the efforts of powerful locomotives, but this zealous woman braved the storm. The eloquence of its howling testified to her deep interest in them, therefore every man who was visited promised to be present the following Sunday, and the promise was kept. An intelligent self-denying interest in the spiritual welfare

of others when courteously manifested, not only makes the approach easy, but also prepares the heart to receive the good seed. W.

You ask how approaches are to be made to the men, and whether the subject of religion is or is not introduced early and formally?

These questions are somewhat difficult to answer, because I have not yet discovered any one method applicable alike to all cases.

In going into a ward filled with new patients, I generally have in my hand a packet of Ryle's handbills. Most of the men, we will suppose, are convalescents,—a few, however, being badly wounded or ill. To each of the latter I speak a few words of tender sympathy, with offers of such service as we are permitted to render, concluding with a reference to that dear Saviour, who was bruised for our offenses and wounded for our transgressions, and who feels with every sufferer.

With the convalescent, a question about his wound or sickness opens the conversation, when I try to draw him out (*without asking many questions*) about his battles, his wounds, his home and family, his early life, etc.; and the man must be very reticent, or I very stupid, if I do not soon learn his most marked characteristics, and thus discover how to approach him on the subject of religion. Is he a man of warm affections, to whose eyes the mention of wife or mother, and of "home, sweet home," brings the starting tear; then the story of a Saviour's love and the description of the heavenly home, where sundered ties are reunited, where warfare is unknown, and the weary are at rest, are likely to make an impression. Is he manly, energetic, and decided, taking a deep interest in all the great questions how convulsing the country, with his mind made up upon them all; then the question naturally suggests itself, are you

as decided and as earnest with regard to the great warfare between God and Satan?—on which side are you? followed by an appeal to his manliness and decision; not to be halting between two opinions, or indifferent to that in which God and angels take the deepest interest, the salvation of his soul. Is he wild, reckless, and dissipated, with good impulses, not yet *hardened* in sin; I tell him of the prodigal son wasting his substance, finding no real happiness while far from his father's house, and of that father's readiness to receive him, of the vanity of the world, and the true and lasting peace which religion gives. Is he heavy, stolid, dull, taken up with material things; I tell him of the shortness and uncertainty of life, the awfulness of eternity, and the necessity of immediate and thorough preparation for it.

With many, time or circumstances will not allow of a prolonged conversation; but the news of the day suggests a remark about voting, and this prepares the way for a word about making choice of a spiritual leader, and of fighting spiritual battles. The title of a handbill forms the text for a few remarks about the "soul," "the heavenly treasure," "the Good Shepherd," etc. A wound serves to remind of the wounds sin has made in the soul; the skill of the surgeon, of the great Physician, etc. etc.

I generally speak on the subject of religion, but where there is a likelihood of having frequent opportunities for doing so with an individual, I do not make it the *staple* of conversation, but talk on topics of general or of personal interest apart from it, until his confidence is gained, and my presence is known as something different from the herald of a disagreeable subject. A word now and then, a religious book to read, efforts to induce regular attendance at the Bible-class, manifestations of interest in his family and in his temporal concerns, pave the way for a regular siege, and render the capitulation of the citadel more likely.

Beyond this point, the work can hardly be carried on too

vigorously, by earnest appeals, private interviews, always if possible concluding with prayer, the gift of a Testament or other small token of regard, the writing of occasional notes expressive of deep interest in his spiritual well-being, and allowing him to see from words and manner how agonizing is the thought to his teacher, that he may not, after all, yield to your pleadings and those of the Holy Spirit. Most men say, "If a stranger feels thus about my soul, surely I ought not to be indifferent!"

I have little confidence in death-bed repentance, but do not fail to point the dying to the Cross of Calvary, and read to and pray with them.

I have seldom seen a man, no matter how promising he seemed while under fear of death, who retained beyond a few weeks after complete recovery, his serious impressions.

My greatest hopes are centred upon those who will probably recover; I seek to turn their thoughts towards the subject of religion, to give them books of a religious *tendency* (story-books, etc.) quite as often as religious treatises, to shower upon them little attentions, and so to gain their gratitude and affection that they will be ready, when they get well, to go to a Bible-class, to read, to pray, and thus to begin the Christian life. The following extract from my journal may aid you in understanding our mode of approach, and enable you to aid us by valuable suggestions:

On the 12th of November, a large number of sick and wounded men were brought to us, from Washington. Among the wounded was F——, whose ingenuousness at once interested me. His wound was not a severe one, and he had so far recovered from it as to be able to go out.

About ten days before this, I had commenced holding a class for the instruction of a few of the men, but on the 13th of November I began a regular course of biblical teaching on the Book of Genesis. There were about twenty men present, and as I asked one after another if he wished

to be considered a member of the class, and would have his name put down as such, I came to F——, who answered in the negative; yet I think he was absent but once from that day until he was placed upon the guard, about six weeks later. He came at first, as he told me afterwards, not from any anxiety about his soul, or interest in spiritual things, but from a simple desire to gain knowledge.

A few days after his arrival, as I was one Sunday morning distributing tracts, he and a friend were seated together. Holding in my hand the tract, "I don't mean what I say," I said, "I wonder if this tract would suit either of you; it is about swearing!" F—— replied, "I guess that will do for me." I gave him the tract and passed on.

He had been a great swearer during his nineteen months' service in the army. The question, the tract, and my passing on without saying anything more, made a deep impression on him. This will show you how teachable he was, how ready the soil was to receive the good seed of God's Word, but the devil was equally ready to hinder its productiveness. His father is an earnest and devoted Methodist, his mother died about six years ago; but her teachings are still fresh in his mind, and her death-bed vividly before him, with the earnest, pleading look which said more plainly than words, "prepare to meet me in heaven." He always meant to prepare, and once, when in great danger, "promised" God that if his life should be spared he would "make a profession."

Joined to a natural readiness to receive serious impressions, and the advantages resulting from early religious influences (I cannot call it training), there was great ignorance and superstition.

I have no record of the conversations held with F—— during the first six weeks he was in the hospital. He acknowledged the importance of religion, meant to "make a profession" when he went home, but had many drawbacks,

such as spiritualism, the love of money, fear of ridicule, and apprehension of falling away. I had to combat prejudice and superstition at every step, but had the delight of seeing one stronghold after another yield before the Word and Spirit of God. I think it was about this time that he told me he had always had a desire to be rich, and liked to drive a hard bargain, and he knew he could not consistently do so if he were a Christian.

He has told me since that though he always liked to have me talk to him, yet the continual presentation and discussion of the subject of religion made him so unhappy that he felt as if he must go away to get rid of it; yet his awakened conscience on the other hand impelled him to stay. He always seemed so ready to talk on the subject that I had no idea till long afterwards of the struggle going on in his mind.

Sunday, December 28th.—Had a long and most interesting conversation with F——. He has given up swearing, has prayed daily for the past fortnight, has an earnest desire to serve Christ, a deep interest (he is unwilling to call it love) in his Saviour, but is very distrustful of his own feelings, having always been taught that there can be no true conversion which is not sudden, and the subject of it able to point to the day and hour of its occurrence. I showed him that God's dealings in nature are gradual, that a better test of conversion than being able to point back to a fixed time is to point to present fruit, that he must not look to violent exercises of mind for salvation, but to the finished work of Christ.

Wednesday, December 31st.—Another talk with F——. He is afraid openly to profess himself a Christian, lest he should draw back. I urged him to take no thought for the morrow, to believe God's Word, to trust in his promises, to rely only on his grace. I then dwelt much on the love of the Saviour. He is passionately attached to his father, and I appealed to this love to show what should be his

feeling to his heavenly Father, and to the Saviour who had so loved him as to bleed and die upon the cross for him. Two days after, I spent an hour with him, when he told me that never before Wednesday, after our last conversation, had he realized that Jesus died for *him*. He feels now that he can give up everything for Christ, but grieves that his repentance is not deeper and his love so cold. Again, as very often afterwards, I tried to make him understand that no agonies of penitence, no floods of tears, nothing in and of ourselves would avail for salvation, but simple looking out of ourselves to our Saviour. The lesson has *now* been thoroughly learned.

January 6th.—In the course of a long talk with F——, which satisfied me fully that he was really a Christian,—though he cannot be satisfied of it himself, on account of the gradual nature of the change,—I said, "If you were sure you would escape eternal damnation now, without a Saviour, would you be willing to give him up?" With eyes full of tears he said, "Oh, no, I could not give up my Saviour!" "Could you have said that a few weeks ago?" "No, all I cared for then was to escape damnation."

The fear of man was his greatest snare. He could not kneel in prayer in the presence of his comrades,—could far more easily face the cannon's mouth.

January 8th.—Read to F—— a meditation from the "Earnest Communicant" on the love of Christ. He says he felt the day before yesterday, while on guard, that he could do anything and give up anything for Christ; hopes God will help him to feel so all the time; *then* he will kneel in prayer. "Does God command us to perform our duties when *we feel like* it," said I, "or are his commands absolute?"

He first so far conquered his fear of man as to kneel in church on the 10th of January; but he *felt* like it then, and did not *feel* like it in his room. It appeared almost

impossible to persuade him that it was positively wrong thus to neglect a duty. He prayed God to help him to feel like performing it, and he was waiting and expecting an answer to his prayer, calmly and quietly, sure that it would come in God's good time!

At last, January 14th, I was told F—— had publicly announced his determination to live a new life. He was at his post, on guard, as I left that evening, and I said to him, "I am glad to hear you have made a step in advance, and I am sure you feel the happier for it." He assented, and begged me to come to his room the next day, and talk to him. "But there is almost always some one in your room," said I. "Oh, I don't mind that now," said he; "*I'm not afraid any more!*"

And so it was. The next day he poured out his heart to me; there was no more fear, perfect trust in the Saviour and a most ardent desire to serve Him had cast out fear. "Everything seems different to me now." He was happy.

From this time to the 1st day of February, when he was baptized, I had almost daily conversations with him, encouraging or instructing him, dispelling prejudice or combating error. He felt it a duty to be baptized, but could not believe in the validity of any form but immersion; prayed daily, but could not think specific prayer suited to the glory and majesty of God; was sorry his repentance was so shallow, but believed God would deepen it when he saw fit, etc. But the one daily complaint was that he could not feel sorry for the sins of his past life. "Do you feel sorry for the sins you now daily commit?" "Oh, yes, they grieve me very much; but I feel that the past is all blotted out by the blood of Christ." His Saviour was daily becoming more precious to him, and his faith was as complete and simple as that of a little child. What more could I ask? Nothing. And it was, therefore, with the most perfect

confidence and intense joy that I saw him stand at the font, to enlist in baptism, under the great Captain of our salvation. God grant he may be a faithful soldier and servant to his life's end!

The same day he expressed his desire for confirmation, and said he thought this Church nearer like that founded by the Apostles than any other; *prefers* forms of prayer for public worship; thinks a great deal of confirmation, etc. All very remarkable in one who but a short time ago did not believe in forms of prayer, thought them a mockery, and did not believe that any sincere worship could be connected with them!

But more satisfactory and delightful was the tenderness of conscience evinced in his grief over thoughtless words, and a *feeling* of anger which had been instantly overcome; also, in the habit formed of never taking the Word of God in his hand without prayer for the teaching of God's Holy Spirit.

He, and the others baptized at the same time, committed the Catechism to memory, and received instruction upon it. They were confirmed on the 27th of February, and, on the 1st day of March, received their first communion. It was the happiest day F—— ever passed in his life, he told me.

I found afterwards that the few days preceding his confirmation had been days of deep sorrow and self-abasement. His prayer for deeper repentance was at last answered, Conscience was awakened, and he desired that no one should speak soothingly to him or still her voice; therefore, he did not tell even me of his feelings.

Now that he was fairly launched in the Christian life, I strove to impress upon him the necessity for activity in it, for doing something for the glory of God, and the good of his fellow-men.

I never saw such rapid progress in the Christian life. Every

time I talked with him I was struck with the increase of his love to his Saviour, his humility and tenderness of conscience. He was very unhappy one day at having said hastily to one of his comrades, "What the devil are you going in that car for?" He was weighed and pressed down by it, felt he could not be a Christian, but at last found peace and comfort in the assurance that "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from *all* sin."

Again, he was extremely anxious to be sent home at the end of his term of enlistment, and much troubled at the report that he and all the two years' men were to be retained; but after awhile he could say that he did not care one way or another about it, for he knew it would be all arranged for him as his heavenly Father saw would be best.

When the report of the breaking-up of the hospital was confirmed, and he found he was soon to return to his regiment, he was very fearful of the temptations of camp life, and dreaded lest he should be led away. Some time after, he told me he did not feel afraid of those temptations. I told him I was sorry to hear it, for I was afraid he did not realize his own weakness as he should. "That's the very reason," said he; "I feel that I have no strength in myself, and it is because I can now trust entirely in my Saviour, that I feel that I shall be kept from falling." My own weak faith was rebuked. Again, speaking with him about prayer, I asked if he were ever now troubled with wandering thoughts. He said, "Yes, a great deal, in public worship and social prayer particularly." "Why, how is that? you know you told me a few weeks ago that your thoughts did not wander much in prayer." "Ah," said he, with a meaning smile, "it was because I did not notice so much then."

He has now returned to his regiment, with the most ardent desire and determination to do all the good he can.

He hopes to establish a Bible-class, and though every ounce in a soldier's baggage tells, he had loaded himself with religious books and tracts for distribution among "the boys."

UTILIZING POWER.

Spiritual and moral power are, to a large extent, intrusted to man, to utilize for his own benefit, and for that of his fellows, and a fearful responsibility accompanies this sacred trust. It would seem that the incentive of self-interest should suffice for the full development of the mechanical power that is also intrusted to man; but experience demonstrates that even this strong motive must be intensified before it achieves its highest results. Opposition, or a strong competition in business, usually creates the necessity that is the mother of invention; and as that stimulus abounds in this Republic, and the inventive faculty is not restrained by hereditary usages, the United States is foremost in utilizing mechanical power.

Should not this be equally true of the Church in this free country, and is not God allowing her to be exposed to violent opposition and active competition, to incite her children to use more effectively the spiritual power that He so freely proffers? If these are allowed to proceed too far, despondency will ensue, and surely opposition is now strong enough to arouse the Church to a sense of her danger and of her duty. With large classes of Church-forsaken men and lads, profanity and intemperance have full sway, for soul-destroying irreverence is almost universal with the working class, and good-fellowship being cultivated and expressed by the use of intoxicating drink, this dangerous

custom is yielding a bountiful harvest of crime. That competition also has progressed equally far, is evidenced by the present position of a corrupt Church, whose principles are hostile to republican institutions. Rome has surveyed this land through its length and breadth, warily fortifying every important point, and now she boldly unmasks her batteries, revealing the fact that they are fully manned with the lay force that is the main reliance of Protestantism. Rome theoretically rests solely on priestly power; but in this republic, where volunteer force has achieved such wonders, she has been actively drilling each member of her Church, compacting and organizing them through her sodalities and other associations, and now she is utilizing their power to the utmost, in all her educational, political, and proselyting schemes.

When our Church is thus assaulted on both sides, a necessity is laid upon her to bestir herself, and not, like God's host in olden time, to remain inert and trembling, waiting for some youthful David to utilize a power that is now within the reach of each child of God. May not the divine will have been already indicated by successes achieved in several parishes and missionary stations, where there is no remarkable eloquence or other unusual accompaniments? As the little turbine utilizes more power than the large water-wheel, and can more successfully contend against frost and flood, so it seems by the following narrative, that, under the direction of a rector, a lay Bible-class accomplished much more than clerical cottage lectures; because they are wasteful of strength, and effect so little in giving systematic instruction, or in compacting the hearers and grafting them into the Church. But the incorporation of the independent working class into the Episcopal Church cannot be effected through mission chapels where the minister is not supported by the presence of a band of intelligent and zealous lay co-workers. Neither can it be effected

where the parish church becomes virtually a private chapel, by the sale or rental of its pews, unless the proprietors realize their responsibility, just as the possessor of a life-boat does when men are drowning around him. Much power from on high will be required to produce this needed change, compelling Christians to adopt some measure that gives the promise of converting the world; now that the increasing cost of building and maintaining churches promotes such exclusiveness that even persons of limited means know not where to worship.

At present even the Sunday-school cannot compete with homes of intemperance and profanity; but when such families shall have been renovated and watched over by the means indicated in the following paper, then the work will be comparatively easy, for an examination of our worshiping assemblies reveals an extent of intelligence and power that will, if properly utilized, overcome all opposition and rise superior to every competitor. W.

My dear Sir,—You asked me to send you an account of our mission,—when it was started, how the work had progressed, and what we are doing to-day in this quiet corner of the Lord's vineyard. I must tell you that I was not first on the field at the hamlet of C——. As long ago as 1860, the rector of our parish established cottage readings there, gathering a small number of men and women together for prayer and religious instruction in the house of one of their number.

I cannot give you any particulars of this part of the mission work; how often the lectures were held, nor what was the result of our pastor's labors; but I remember that in the spring of 1863 several persons who had attended the services in C—— were confirmed. During the winter of 1864 the lectures were continued, the number in attendance, at times, being as high as twenty-five; but as the

season advanced, they became less regular, and in the spring they ceased altogether.

It was in the following autumn that I first became interested in the condition of these and other families resident in that vicinity. With the exception of a few persons who attended our Church, all were strangers to me, and little did I dream that there was a field, white unto the harvest, lying at our very doors. One day, hearing that a sick woman in C—— desired me to visit her, I started for her house. Passing down N—— Street, I met a little boy and inquired of him the way, and who lived in the cottages along the roadside. He seemed very much surprised at my ignorance, and hastened to give me all the information I required. After mentioning the names of several families, he said, "That's Mr. M——'s house, where the minister used to preach to the people around here." "And where do they go to church now?" said I. "They don't go anywhere," was his reply; "the churches are too far off." Meantime we had reached the house of my sick friend, and, thanking my little guide for his kindness, I bade him good-by, promising to visit his mother before long. In the course of conversation with the sick woman, whom I will call Mrs. B——, I asked her about the cottage lectures, and whether she thought it would be advisable to hold a Bible-class in one of their houses. She seemed delighted at the proposal, and said that she knew of six or eight who would be glad to come to it. I read and explained a few verses of Scripture to her, and then we prayed together, asking for the guidance and help of the Holy Spirit in the work before us. The next day was Saturday, and early in the morning I started for C——, going first to the house of Mrs. M——. I told her of my plan, and asked her if she were willing that the first meeting should be held at her house, to which she kindly assented. I visited all the families in the immediate neighborhood, inviting them to

our class the next day. I need not tell you how differently my invitation was received by different individuals. Some "couldn't promise;" some "expected to be away from home;" some "hadn't been to church for years, and thought that they would not begin now." A few positively refused, and of all that I visited, only six promised to attend. I thought of our recent hospital work, of the numbers who met together daily for the study of God's Word and prayer, and my unbelieving heart said, "What are these among so many?" But when I thought of the worth of one immortal soul, and of the help vouchsafed to those who believe, I determined at least to try.

Sunday afternoon came, and at the appointed time I was at Mrs. M——'s. I had previously sent down a supply of Testaments and Prayer-Books, and took with me several packages of tracts. To my surprise I found eleven persons waiting for me, some of them the very men who had most decidedly refused to come. After speaking a few words to them, we opened the class by singing a hymn, and then knelt in prayer, using the General Confession, the Lord's Prayer, and others which I had selected from the Prayer-Book, asking the blessing of God upon our work, and the help and guidance of his Holy Spirit. I then read to them the gospel for the day, dwelling at length on a few verses, and asking questions of the class in a general way. In the course of the lesson I referred to the work before us,—its object, and the difficulties which we must expect to encounter, and asked their hearty co-operation by prayer and daily effort to induce others to join us. We closed with prayer and singing the 75th hymn, "Come, Holy Spirit, Heavenly Dove," and then I distributed Testaments and Prayer-Books among them, and lent each one a book to read during the week.

I learned, through one of the scholars, that a large number of men in that neighborhood were employed in the

mills, just below N—— Street, and on further inquiry, I found that most of them were Englishmen, several of whom had but lately arrived in the country. I determined at once to make myself known to Mr. W——, the owner of the mill, and asked him to tell the men about the Bible-class, and when the next would be held. He kindly gave me permission to visit the mills at certain hours of the day, when many hands would be idle and I would have opportunity to invite them myself, and he offered to do all in his power to further the good cause, "For there is need enough of such work in these parts." Moreover, he invited me to go through the mill with him, which offer I gladly accepted; and as we passed through the various departments, I spoke to the men, and urged them to meet with us on the following Sunday. The result was very much the same as in the first instance,—they all (or nearly all) began, with one consent, to make excuse. Changing my tactics, I asked them *as a favor* to give us a trial, it could do no harm; I would detain them but one hour. "And besides," said I to one who seemed most apt in finding excuses, "there is something about *you* in our Sunday lesson." His last plea had been that he had promised his wife to ride to the neighboring town on Sunday afternoon. "Well," said he, "if that is the case, I suppose that there is no escaping, and if H—— will promise to go with me, you may see me." "I won't promise that," said H——, "for if I do I must keep my word." "That is exactly why I want you to do so," I replied. "Well," said H——, "if it is possible for me to be there I will come." "And bring as many with you as you can," I added; "your example will do more in this matter than all that I can say, to induce your friend to join us." And so we parted. On leaving the mills, Mr. W—— said to me, "You have made a good beginning; that young man will be a great help to you if he becomes interested in the class himself."

I waited anxiously for Sunday to come, improving the days intervening in visiting the homes of my new acquaintances, and learning all that I could of their personal history. Beyond this, I could only pray to God to keep alive in the hearts of these men this newly-awakened interest, and to guide and direct my paths. It was a sore disappointment to me when I awoke on Sunday morning to find that it was raining. There will be no class to-day, thought I, for the weather will prove sufficient excuse for all who will feel unwilling to come. But I determined to go myself, believing that the example of the teacher has great weight with the scholar.

I found, to my delight, a class of seventeen assembled at Mrs. M——'s, and among them was H—— and his friend, who had also brought a companion with him; his wife, whom he had persuaded to postpone the promised ride, and come to the Bible-class, "to hear something about him." The subject of my lesson was the parable of the great Supper. When I came to the verse, "And a third said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come," I saw that W—— (my new acquaintance), who was listening attentively, colored deeply and glanced at H——, who nodded his head and smiled; but as I enlarged upon the great truths of the parable, H——'s countenance assumed a serious expression, and while we sang the closing hymn, "Hasten, sinner, to be wise," he sat still, absorbed apparently in deep thought. All who were present asked me to add their names to the list of members of the Bible-class. Many expressed their satisfaction at having yielded to my invitation, and one remarked, "If this thing goes on, it will soon tell on A——'s and B——'s," mentioning two of the lager-beer saloons in that neighborhood. "Indeed, I expect that they wonder where a good many of us are this afternoon." I gave Testaments to those who had none, and some appeared as much pleased at receiving their

present as if they had been little children. "I always meant," said one man, "to buy myself a Bible; but my money never seemed to stay by me long enough for me to get one. I suppose, too, *that I liked better to spend it for other things.*"

I cannot attempt to give you even an imperfect sketch of the work during the winter of 1865, or of the many cases in which I felt most deeply interested. It was not without its trials and disappointments. Often I would return from the class with a heavy heart, feeling that little or no impression had been made on the minds of those who were most constantly in my thoughts and prayers. And then the depressing sense of the many things left *unsaid*, which, by the grace of God might have been a help and blessing to some soul yet out of Christ! How many times have those, just awakening to an interest in heavenly things, been induced by evil counsel or ridicule to absent themselves from the Bible-class!—and I always found it harder to bring such back than to gain their consent to come when I first invited them. And yet withal, the work prospered, and in the spring of 1866 the class numbered upwards of fifty members. Beside the class on Sundays, we began a course of study on the Acts of the Apostles, which we continued during the winter, meeting every Wednesday evening. The evening class was better attended than that held on Sunday, many of the women being unable to leave their families through the day.

The interest manifested by many of them in the success of our mission, was a source of great comfort and encouragement to me. "A woman's work is never done," as those mothers can testify, who labor from morning till night to provide for their households; and yet when night came, and the little ones were safe in bed, these women would leave their work to meet with us for prayer and the study of God's Word. Often I would be surprised to see them

at the evening class, knowing that they had worked so hard all day; for, going in and out among them at all hours, I could appreciate the effort they made in coming. Once I remonstrated with Mrs. D——, and told her that she ought to have stayed at home and tried to take a little rest, for I saw that she was very tired. "That is just the reason why I came," she said, "for it rests me more than anything else can do, to leave my work and come up here for a little while. Oh," she added, and her eyes filled with tears, "it is so pleasant to hear the singing; and when we pray together, it makes me feel so quiet! We used to have a Bible-class where I lived in England, but since we came to this country I have never been able to attend one. *I wonder that church people do so little of this work.*" I made no answer, but I asked myself, Is it from ignorance, or want of faith and of the Holy Spirit, that we, his followers, are losing such opportunities of spreading the knowledge of the gospel of salvation?

During the winter we began a course of study on the Catechism. Several of the class had become alive to a sense of their need of the Saviour, and their own sinfulness and ingratitude in so long neglecting his offers of mercy. Among those who seemed to feel most deeply on the subject were H—— and his friend C——, in whom the work of God's Holy Spirit was most evident; and never was I more fully conscious of our insufficiency for these things than in the case of that man. In his younger days he had given some thought to these matters, but had put off the great question till he should have a more convenient season. Meantime, coming in contact with certain persons who ignored the divinity of Christ, and the authority of the Bible as the Word of God; he listened to their arguments, and read the works of Payne and other infidel writers, in order, as he said, to satisfy his mind on the subject. The result of this was that I found him, in his latter

years, a stranger to the promises of God; regarding the great doctrine of salvation in Christ Jesus as a matter of little importance, if not altogether "unreasonable."

I afterwards learned that his motive in consenting to attend the class was simply "to hear my views on the subject," and, by close questioning, to make me acknowledge that certain passages in the Bible were wholly contradictory. Almost every time he would come prepared with some "unanswerable argument" in favor of his views, and would study the lesson in advance, in hope of finding something which was not consonant with the doctrine of regeneration. "It stands to *reason* that it cannot be," he would say, and that was enough to satisfy his mind as to the soundness of any teaching not consonant with his own views. Still, it was very evident that his soul was ill at ease, and I noticed a change in his manner when asking for information; it was no longer that of one who asks but to object and ridicule, but of one who is honestly seeking after the truth. One day he said to me, "I wish I could see these things as some do; but I suppose that it was not meant that I should." "And why do you think so, C——?" "Because the harder I try to understand such passages as this (pointing to the words, 'For God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten Son,' etc.), my mind becomes confused." "And what do you do then?" "Do? why, I give it up and try to forget it." "Suppose we try another way, C——. Do you ever ask God to make these things plain to you? Do you ever pray?" "No," said he, "I am not a hypocrite; and besides, what good could it do to pray if I don't believe in it?" "Let us ask God to make us believe; may I pray for you?" And, closing the door, I knelt beside him, and asked that God would in his mercy enlighten the mind of his servant, and lead him to the knowledge of his salvation through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that He would give him the spirit of a little child, and enable him

to receive in faith what he could not understand. Meanwhile C—— had risen from his seat, and was walking up and down the room with an expression of painful anxiety upon his countenance that touched my heart. At length he stopped, and, standing for an instant by my side, we knelt together and he repeated with me the Lord's Prayer. It was a hard struggle, and nothing but the all-subduing power of the Spirit of God could have brought that man, in the attitude of a suppliant, before his Saviour. I afterward spoke to him of the long-suffering goodness of God; how long the Saviour had borne with him; how ready He was to receive and save him now, though it were the eleventh hour. "Will you pray to-night, C——?" "If I can," he answered. "We have all tried a great many ways which promised to give us peace and satisfaction, and they have done us no good whatever; now we will try *God's way.*" And, saying this, I put into his hand a copy of that invaluable little book, *God's Way of Peace*, with the beautiful hymn, "Just as I am." Then I left him, promising to come again the following day, and to remember him in my prayers.

For weeks I visited him almost daily; at times, stopping only to say a few words of encouragement, and again passing an hour or two with him in the study of the Bible and in prayer. I remember that he read Bishop McIlvaine's "Evidences of Christianity" with great interest, and was constantly comparing the Old and New Testaments. I urged him to talk freely with our pastor, and to go to him without hesitation for spiritual advice.

I wish that I could remember, more perfectly, many of our conversations at that time; there were so many doubts and questionings, so much of the old spirit of unbelief to contend with still, and yet the quiet work of the Spirit going on within his heart, convincing him more and more of his sinfulness, and leading him, in answer to his prayers,

to the foot of the Cross, to the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world.

When once his mind found rest in his Lord and Saviour, his great desire was to confess Him openly, and in the course of a few months he was confirmed with others of our number. Is there not a great deal in such a case as his to encourage those of us who are striving to win souls to Christ, and sometimes feeling very much disheartened because we see so little immediate result of our labor? We are apt to forget that our strength springs from our consciousness of weakness, and that prayer and the Spirit of God can prevail where mere human strength can accomplish but little; and now, when disposed at times to say "it is of no use," I think of this instance of the power of God's grace, and take fresh courage to persevere unto the end.

With H——, who was confirmed at the same time, the change was no less evident. Two men could not have been more unlike than he and his neighbor C——. While the latter was disposed to reject all that did not coincide with his own views,—counting it unworthy of a being endowed with reasoning faculties to accept what he could not understand,—the former had never given any serious thought to spiritual things. He would read his Bible "because there were so many beautiful passages contained in it," and he loved to hear it "*well* read and explained." He could not understand what satisfaction there could be in reading the Bible, if we had made up our minds to disagree with everything in it. He was satisfied that it was the Word of God, and if he found anything there beyond his comprehension, he was willing to pass it by for the present, believing that the fault was in himself. His character was a strange combination of strength and weakness, disposed to give up anything too readily when difficulties presented themselves, but if once his interest was enlisted, he would

persevere until he found what he sought. Always inclined to doubt his own judgment, and hearing so many conflicting opinions on the subject of religion, he had thought it best to leave it alone, and try to live as near right as he could. "And I find it hard enough to *do that*," said he, "without attempting anything else." "You are trying to do something beyond the strength of man," said I. "You need the help of God. You are like a soldier going out unarmed to meet the enemy." "You mean," said H——, "that I ought to be a Christian, and I wish I were. But I know that I could not live up to what is required, and I should not want to go back after having once begun." On questioning him closely, I found that the love of God, in Christ Jesus, was something he could not receive.

"I believe it is every man's duty to be a Christian, and I do try to do what is right, but when I hear others speak of the *love* of God, I can't understand it, my only feeling is that of fear. I suppose that when I am a better man I shall love Him, and then I shall feel that *He loves me too.*" "We love him because he *first* loved us," was my reply. "Come to the class to-night," I added, as he shook his head doubtfully at these words, "and perhaps you may hear something which will help you." He came in company with his friend C——, and as I looked on these two men, so different in disposition and tone of mind, the one then unwilling to forsake the worship of his idol "reason" (as he deemed it), the other, so ignorant of our true relation to God, and of his love towards us, I could only commit them to his mercy, whose grace is able to subdue the proud spirit, and give light to those who are in darkness.

I have never met with one whose mind was more firmly impressed with the idea of winning God's favor by our own merits, than in the case of H——. He looked upon God as our heavenly Father, so far as the duty of obedience and reverence was concerned, and believed that He regarded us

with favor according to our own righteousness. And, oh, how many have I met with, who, like H——, are trying to keep God's commands, and "live as near right as they can," without the strength and consolation of that love which passeth understanding; souls that only needed to realize the love of God in Christ Jesus to induce them to seek his mercy, and "find peace and joy in believing!" "My mistake," said H——, "has been this, that in trying to do right, *I have begun at the wrong end.* I was trying to be a *good man* first, and *then* I hoped that I should begin to love God; and even now, when I think of all that He has done for me, *it seems too good to believe.*"

"Think of it," said another to me, shortly after confirmation. "A year ago to-day you stopped at the place where three of us were at work, and asked us to come to the class that night; don't you remember about it?" "No," said I; "but what did you do?" "After you left us, we had a good laugh, and one of the men said, 'I would walk a mile to see S—— in a Bible-class, trying to look sober.' I told him that there was no fear of my going to such places at present; but that night I kept thinking of what you had said, and at last I took my hat and went up to Mrs. M's. When I got there, I felt ashamed to come in, and so I went around to the kitchen and sat outside to listen. And when you told me the next day how sorry you were not to see me at the class, I felt just as if I had been caught stealing."

Meantime our class had so increased in members that it was found necessary to provide another place for us. Our pastor laid the matter before the congregation; a collection was soon after taken in the church for our benefit, and a sum was raised sufficient to erect a building suited to our wants. This was completed in the autumn of 1866, and now begins a new era in our mission-work, of which I will tell you in another paper.

UTILIZED POWER.

My dear Sir,—I told you in my last of the progress of our mission-work during the winter of 1865 and the following spring, when the building of our chapel was proposed. This was completed in the autumn, and it was a happy day to us all when we first assembled there for religious service. Many of the old congregation and others interested in the cause were present to join with us in the worship of God, besides a large number attracted by curiosity or the example of their neighbors.

Many had held back heretofore, under the plea that they were strangers to Mrs. W——, and it would seem like intrusion on their part to come to the Bible-class at her house, notwithstanding my assurance that they were always welcome. Others argued with more plausibility that there was not room, but now that the church had provided a suitable place for them all, they were forced to acknowledge that there was no longer any good ground for an excuse. I alluded in the Bible-class, to the goodness of God in thus prospering our undertaking and making the way plain before us, and said that the best proof we could give of our gratitude would be a prayerful devotedness to his service. There was no one of our number who seemed happier in the enjoyment of our present blessings, or more hopeful of the future than H——. "If prayer and our own efforts will insure us the help of God," he said, "I feel confident that we shall succeed. Several of us have agreed to pray for each other, and do all that we can to bring our friends to the chapel. B—— and I talked the matter over last night, and I told him that it would not do to be so thankful about ourselves as to forget others."

It was with deep interest that I watched the growth of grace in these young disciples of Christ, and how the influ-

ence of *one*, either for good or evil, would affect the rest of our number; and I have often found that one of the strongest arguments which I could use to incite them to earnest effort, was the weight of their influence upon others. "It makes me feel as if I had the charge of all my friends, when you speak of the Church as the body of Christ, and of ourselves as members one of another,'" said one of them, referring to our lesson on the twelfth chapter of I. Corinthians.

I have never witnessed more striking examples of the power of faith, and of that grace which is all-sufficient, than during the winter of 1866, when so many were forced to sit idle because no man had hired them. We in our comfortable homes, with all the surroundings of taste and refinement, are sometimes too harsh in our judgment of the sins and shortcomings of our less favored brethren. Could we examine more closely into their daily life, we should understand better how much they have to contend with. How, for instance, shall a man seated at his loom, with his day's work before him, escape the low conversation, the profane jests of his companions on subjects which now are so sacred to him? When they question him on his new faith, only to turn his answers into ridicule, what shall he do? You will say, "Bear it in the spirit of his Master, who reviled not again; or, like the great apostle, entreat them to be reconciled to God." But the easier and more natural way is, to lose temper, or weakly join in the laugh, and so deny his Lord. And then, the temptations along the wayside,—leaving his work at evening determined to go directly home, he finds a party of his old companions waiting for him at the corner, to stop and take a drink with them, and he must choose between sinning against his own conscience, or gaining the ill will of his acquaintances. I can well appreciate the feeling of discouragement which prompted one who was trying to lead a new life, to say to me, "There is but little in such a place as this to help a man

to do better. When I am at work I find it hard enough to keep from joining in with what I know to be wrong, but on the *street*, it seems as if everything was against me. I don't think that I could be a Christian so long as I live in this neighborhood." But he does not think so *now*, for he has learned to look to a higher power for strength in time of need.

As I said, there was a great deal of suffering during the winter of 1866 among those who had been able hitherto to support their families by their daily labor, as they found it very difficult to obtain employment. I remember that one day hearing that H—— was sick, I called to see him, and in the course of conversation he told me that he had probably lost his place in the mill. "My wife is almost ready to give up," said the sick man, "but I tell her to be glad that this did not happen nine months ago, for I *could not have seen it in the same way then;* and what is the comfort of believing in God if I cannot feel that He will take care of me when I am in trouble?"

"I told E—— yesterday," said another, "when I used up the last of our flour, that I did not know where the next would come from, and yet I did not feel uneasy about it, for there has always been a way provided for us." Do not such as these need to be cheered and helped onward; not only by providing for their present actual need, but much more by Christian sympathy and encouragement, praying *with* them as well as for them, and making them realize that their daily wants and trials are known to their Father in heaven? And *this* is within the power of any Christian woman, for it does not require the gift of eloquence to cheer the lonely, or to tell the ignorant of the love of Christ. One does not need any special talent to speak words of kindness, which often go further than silver or gold to make the tired heart glad and to leave a blessing behind them.

About this time, we opened a Sunday-school for the children in that neighborhood, many of whom had never attended any place of religious instruction. Certain members of the Bible-class became teachers, and for such we held teachers' meetings once a week; we studied the lesson together, and suggestions were made of different ways in which the school might be increased and made attractive and useful to the little ones. I felt that this work might prove a real blessing to the teachers as well as to the children, as it would make them feel that they had work to do in the Lord's vineyard; and as they had been taught the great truths of the gospel, so it was their duty to instruct others. A few kind friends helped us to obtain a suitable library for the children, and so we began our work under very favorable auspices.

Meantime the number of those who attended service on Sunday evenings was constantly increasing, and new faces greeted me at almost every meeting of the Bible-class.

It was delightful to see how heartily they engaged in the Church-service, joining with us in chanting the Psalter, as well as in singing the hymns. Many were wholly unaccustomed to the use of the Prayer-Book, but it required only a few words of explanation to make them familiar with its arrangement. I have heard the remark made that the Church-service was only suitable for congregations comprised of persons of education and refinement; but that this is not the case, is very evident from the interest which these people manifested in the use of their Prayer-Books. Often, after the Bible-class, the men and women would ask me questions about the Prayer-Book; the meaning of the names of certain Sundays and Holy-days; why the Psalms differed from those in the Bible, etc.; and after answering their questions as briefly as possible, I would promise to explain the matter more fully at the class which we held once a week for the study of the Prayer-Book. I think that

I mentioned that this class was opened during the winter of 1865 for the benefit of those who were seriously considering the duty of baptism or confirmation. A great many besides these had become interested in this course of study, and the attendance was now as good as at either of the other classes.

In saying so much about our work in the chapel, I would not give you the impression that I considered the teaching at the Sunday-school or the Bible-classes as more important than the other duties outside. If any were absent from the class twice in succession, I always made it my rule to visit them and discover the cause; and when I had succeeded in bringing to the chapel any persons who were unwilling to come, I would see them as soon after as possible, and tell them how much it pleased me to find them there; and, by referring to the subject of the lesson, and asking them if they agreed with what we had said, the way was opened for a direct personal application of the truth. It would often be said to me by members of the class, "I cannot persuade H—— or G—— to come to the chapel, but I think that if you asked them it might do some good." I always encourage the men to mention such cases to me, for a stranger can often effect more than an acquaintance in overcoming a man's prejudices against the Church and everything connected with it. When they find that you are interested in their particular case, "that you have taken this long walk just to see *them*, and invite them to come to the class to-night," they will often yield. The fact that you are a *stranger*, and therefore can be influenced by no selfish motive in his case, will often come very near to the heart of a laboring man, especially if he has no family ties. In the words of N——, he "did not suppose there was any one in this country who would walk a mile to see him if he were alive or dead." And yet, though you may leave that man with every reason to hope that your visit has accomplished its object, you may be disappointed by not

finding him at the class that evening. He may have kept your words constantly in his mind and fully purposed to attend, and yet when the time came his heart failed him. I make such cases my own, and recall the unwillingness I felt in other days, to receive religious instruction. I think that in our whole intercourse with those whom we are seeking to bring to Christ, there is no point where a greater responsibility devolves upon us than just here. You have had personal intercourse with your new acquaintance and gained his good will, and now that he has disappointed you, he will naturally shrink from meeting you again, and for this very reason you should lose no time or opportunity for a second interview. Tell him how sorry you were that he was absent, and gradually make him feel that you have not come to upbraid him, but to encourage him to try again. It will not then be hard for him to tell you the whole truth and what really held him back. That man needs our sympathy and prayers, and all the helps that we can give, through the promises of our Saviour, to those who are faint-hearted and easily discouraged. The fact that you have not allowed distance or weather to deter you from what you felt to be your duty toward him, as well as your pleasure, will not fail to produce good results. It often seems incredible to the minds of working people that Christian men and women should be willing and *glad* to sacrifice their own ease and personal comfort to minister to them. They have not yet realized a *Saviour's* love, and so cannot appreciate the power that prompts his people to go and do likewise. When I first felt a desire to do something for the cause of Christ, I made the common mistake of supposing that we could accomplish little unless the people knew us, or without a liberal use of means in supplying their temporal wants. Subsequent experience has taught me that this system has more of self than Christ in its workings and results. You can easily draw men and women into your

class, where the *hint* of any possible advantage to them or their children (in a worldly point of view) would deter them. An injudicious use of money, though it be from the kindest motives, will often do more to injure than to promote the end in view. If once this class of people are led to connect the idea of temporal gain with confessing Christ, the real *spiritual* work in that community will make but little progress. The sordid may attend your classes, receive you into their houses most cordially, but the hold that you are acquiring over them is by the loaves and fishes, rather than because you have pointed them to the Saviour. It is hard always to bear this in mind, for the natural prompting of the heart is, to use *every* means that is lawful to induce men to come and be taught of Christ. But if our object be solely to glorify God and to produce *lasting* results for the good of souls, we shall find that many things lawful are not expedient. The injury done by an injudicious use of money among these people is not confined to the individual who receives it. Its bad effects are felt very generally, for it gives the enemies of Christ occasion to speak of the missionary-work as a mode of buying men, hindering many from coming, lest they should be suspected of some wrong motive in so doing. Then again, there are many ardent Christian women of very limited means who would be denied the privilege of entering this field of labor if a free use of money were *necessary* to carry on the work. All cases are not to be treated alike, and only by acquainting ourselves with the circumstances and surroundings of those under our charge can we act with discretion in these matters. I can add my testimony for the encouragement of others, that I have visited among men and women to whom I was an utter stranger, and who, in many instances, were prejudiced against the Church, and, by *persevering* in my feeble efforts to commend Christ's love to them, have won their confidence without any other influence.

I could tell you of many cases to prove what I have said in regard to the power of Christian sympathy and interest over the hearts of the laboring classes. On one occasion Mrs. N—— said to me just as I was about to leave the house, "Oh, if you only knew how glad it makes me feel to see you coming, I am sure you wouldn't mind the trouble!" "But I never thought it was a trouble," said I, "it is a pleasure to me." "There," said she, "that is just what my husband says. He told me the other night after you were gone, that he liked to have you come here, for you always *noticed the children and treated us like real friends.*" Another time, observing a bunch of beautiful wild flowers on the table, I said, "How cheerful these make your room look! I wonder if I can guess who picked them?" turning to a little girl who stood beside her mother. "Yes, Mary picked these," said Mrs. N——, "she heard you say how much you liked them, and so she and the little boy went out to the woods to find some for you, and when they came home, they put the room in order, so it would *look nice* when you came. The first question they asked when they came home to dinner was, whether you had been to see us to-day." Oh, if our Christian ladies, instead of *sending* their gifts of charity by the hands of servants, or those who feel no personal interest in the recipients, would only carry them *themselves* or sanctify them with prayer, they would increase their value tenfold! Apart from the opportunity afforded of speaking a word of counsel, or encouragement, or warning, as the case may be, it makes that poor tired heart glad to see a new face, and hear the kindly voice of "the friend who is so good to her children." Yes, after you have gone, she will think over what you have said, and tell it to "Father" and the little ones, and your name becomes a household word,—your visits the occasion of new resolves and hopes for the future.

The number of attendants at the evening classes continued

to increase, and, in the majority of cases, they came very regularly. And let me add, that among those who were most interested in our course of study of the Prayer-Book, were those whose prejudices against the Church I had almost thought it impossible to overcome. In the spring, the bishop visited us and confirmed seventeen more of our number. And so the work goes on, though it has its discouragements, its hinderances, its dark places.

An occasion like confirmation, where several take their stand openly for Christ, is a call for renewed effort and watchfulness on the part of Christian teachers and friends. We must guard them against temptation, lest the old habits and associates prove too strong. We must cheer them on their way, *taking notice of everything* which indicates effort on their part to live a consistent life. Our hardest trial is to see anything which looks like coldness, indifference, or backsliding on the part of those who have confessed their Saviour; but if, notwithstanding entreaties and counsel on our part and the advice of the pastor, one becomes indifferent, there is but one resort,—the first, the last, the surest,—I mean the *Mercy-Seat.*

Only ten days since, I was called to the bedside of a sick woman, evidently in consumption. I remembered her face, but could not recall the time when I had met her before. "I am afraid that you have forgotten me," she said, as I approached her bedside. "I was taking care of Mrs. R——, when you used to visit her before she died, and though I didn't think much about what you said then, I often wished since that you would come and *talk to me.* The other night I tried to pray, but I felt as if I wanted some Christian person to *pray with me.*" In the course of conversation I asked her if she was able to read, and mentioned some books which I would bring her. "I have only this one beside my Bible which I care much for," she replied. "It belonged to my mother, and when I feel bad,

I love to read over the prayers in it," she added, and handed me a copy of our Prayer-Book, defaced, and with the pages turned down at the General Confession, the Communion-service, and several other places. When I told her it was the Prayer-Book of our Church, she appeared delighted, and said, with tears in her eyes, "If I am ever well again, how much I shall enjoy going to the chapel!" We prayed together, and then I bade her good-by. As I passed down-stairs, I met her sister with two other young women on their way to visit their sick friend. After a few words I invited them to the class to-morrow evening, and with some hesitation, they promised to come; and one said, "If I go, mother will come too, for she has said that she would like to, if she did not have to go alone. She can't see very well and is afraid of falling." "Oh, tell her," replied her friend, "that we will take good care of her, and besides, I will *bring John* with me, and he will see her safely home again." And in this way they come,—one helping another,—souls waiting till some one calls them and points them to our blessed Lord and Saviour. Perhaps some one will say, "Do you think they will keep their promise?" I cannot say, but I hope so, and make them the subject of special prayer. Meantime, to-morrow evening will prove.

I know that I have told you nothing new, nothing remarkable in any way, and I am glad that it is so, for this simple record proves his blessed words of promise: "My grace is sufficient for thee. My strength is made perfect in weakness."

"FREELY YE HAVE RECEIVED, FREELY GIVE."

THE application of this divine principle is displayed throughout the domain of nature. The earth freely gives out the beauty, sweetness, and warmth that are intrusted to it, illustrating some of the qualities and operations of divine love, and also teaching man how to adapt *his* sacred trust to the need, or even to the taste of his less favored brethren. Man is no laggard in culling and arranging the beautiful things of earth and in flavoring its sweet things, or in giving out genial warmth to win the affections of young and old for himself, but he too often manifests a criminal apathy in dispensing the spiritual sweetness and warmth that God has intrusted to him.

A profound observer of God's ways with man, said that "'freely ye have received, freely give,' is the fundamental principle established by our Lord for the spread of his kingdom." St. Peter tells us, "As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God;" and Archbishop Leighton thus commented on these words: "All is received to *minister to each other*, and mutual benefit is the true use of all, suiting the mind of Him who dispenses all, and the *way* of his dispensation. . . . Not only the outward and common gifts of mind, but even saving grace which seems most intrusted and appropriated for thy private good, yet is not wholly for that, even thy graces are for the good of thy brethren. . . . As Christians are defective in other duties of love, so most in that most important duty of advancing the good of each other." Thus the saintly Archbishop strove "to banish and drive away from the Church an erroneous and strange doctrine contrary to God's Word," that had gradually grown up during the Dark Ages, when an ignorant and superstitious laity bought indulgences, and when their accredited ministers

held their sway by priestcraft. Looking to the laity solely for gold and silver, and to the clergy as the only accredited channels of spiritual grace, is "an erroneous doctrine," and Hebrews, x. 24, 25, shows how contrary it is to God's Word.

Few, if any ministers, theoretically affirm this erroneous doctrine now, but practically it is so universal that the line of separation between Christians and worldlings is too often discovered at communion seasons only, whilst very many of those who are ordained to the priesthood, and even to the higher office, are forced to become secularized, by duties that appertain to the laity. As long as the clergy perform the spiritual duties of Christian laymen, instead of stirring them up to the work to which they are called of the Holy Ghost, so long the laity will allow the clergy to assume their secular duties, so far as they are self-sacrificing.

This state of things will continue, and perhaps become more aggravated, unless the laity are spiritually refreshed by the primitive practice of going "everywhere preaching the Word," and of "considering one another to provoke unto love and to good works," and then, as of old, they will "freely bring the money and lay it at the Apostles' feet."

If the laity are not trained to win souls to Christ, they are separated from one of the highest means of grace, the Church is thereby spiritually impoverished, spasmodic appeals for money to be effective must be increasingly eloquent and urgent, and, what is still more to be deprecated, the liberal giver will be more courted and honored than the ardent and effective worker.

"This erroneous and strange doctrine" is at length being effectually driven away from some parishes, as is vividly pictured in the following paper, which was read and approved by the minister who commissioned the writer of it, and who supervises her work in his mission chapel.

Sea and land have lately been mightily moved by the breaking forth of pent-up forces, filling the mind of man

with dread ; but may not these natural convulsions be precursors of the complete development of still more potent divine agencies now pent up in woman's head and heart ?

If no man can estimate the power to be yielded by our inexhaustible supply of coal, when sufficient oxygen—the life and spirit of the air—unites with it to produce perfect combustion, so all calculation fails in the attempt to affix any limit to the power of the Holy Ghost acting through the inexhaustible experiences of human life, now pent up in the human breast. It may be asked, if this be so, why, then, has not the Church earlier developed this power ? But a satisfactory reason should first be given for the delay in the use of coal, which was not allowed in London and its vicinity, under pain of imprisonment, until the close of the *fourteenth* century of our Christian era, whilst its use here is still in its infancy.

The following record testifies that this mingling of divine and human power, flowing through woman's head and heart, has changed rude boys who are the usual pests of the Sunday-school, developing in them an ardent missionary spirit manifested in prayer, and in self-denying efforts for home and distant fields. "Elisha went forth unto the spring of waters, and cast the salt in there, and said, Thus saith the Lord, I have healed these waters, there shall not be from thence any more death." If Jesus has been glorified and the Holy Ghost given, is there not some agency within the reach of every Christian to heal the spring and induce the flow of "rivers of living water," where there is now barrenness or spiritual death ? The Bible is the only accredited record of special providences, yet since the sacrifice of his Son, surely the Father watches over his children with a still tenderer interest, and when our eyes are spiritually opened we will see providences like the following recital of the almost miraculous guidance of a sinner who feared that God had given him up. W.

My dear Sir,—Knowing how deep an interest you feel in the success of our mission-work in the new chapel, I am going to tell you something about one branch of it which is now occupying a large share of my time and thoughts,—I mean our Sunday-school. I never so fully realized, as now, what a powerful instrument for good it may become through God's grace,—not only to the souls of our children, but through them to their fathers and mothers. If I can succeed in winning my way to the hearts of the little ones, one great step is taken towards gaining the good will and confidence of their parents. My aim has been to make our Sunday-school as attractive as possible, and for this reason we are giving especial attention to the *music*. The children are now trying to master portions of the Psalter and some of the additional hymns. Of these their favorite is "Jerusalem the Golden," and several have committed it to memory. My rule is to allow the boys and girls to take turns in choosing the closing hymn, and *this* is almost invariably the one selected. Does not this show that children are able to appreciate something better than much of the music so commonly used in Sunday-schools?

I try to make the children feel that their help is needed in carrying on our missionary work, and that their part is not only to attend the school themselves, but to bring in others. I depend upon them to keep me informed of any children in the neighborhood who go nowhere to Sunday-school, and to tell me of any case of sickness or want which they know of. Several promised me their assistance, and the good effects of their efforts are already visible in the increase of our number.

I mentioned, in my last letter to you, that the Sunday-school was the means of drawing many to the chapel who had hitherto held back. Among these was neighbor M——. I had tried in vain to persuade him to come to the Bible-class,—his unanswerable argument being "It's a waste of

time to try to move men that's been going one way as long as I have, better try to bring in the young folks," or else,—"I left all *that* behind me in the old country." Finding that his mind was fully made up on this point, I asked, would he not send the children? To this he willingly acceded, saying, "I have heard a good deal about the singing in your school, and my eldest girl has a good voice; at any rate we think so." So it was arranged that the children should meet with us the following Sunday. The time came, but not the little girls; and I had given up the hope of seeing them that day, when just as we were beginning the services, to my surprise, Mr. M—— entered the room with his daughters. After leading them to one of the front benches, he retired to a seat near the door and there he stayed till the school closed. After dismissing the scholars, I went to him and told him how glad we were to see him there. He thanked me, and said, "The children would not let me rest till I had heard them sing the new hymns." "And how did *they* learn them?" I asked. "Oh, they caught them by hearing the other children sing them on the way to the day-school." He has since attended the Sunday-school and Bible-class regularly.

Many of the boys and girls belong to our missionary association, and though their offerings be but small, I cannot doubt that God will accept and bless them to the spreading of the glad tidings of salvation. Not satisfied with this, they wished to have a missionary-box of their *own*, to see what could be done by taking up a collection every Sunday. They chose a treasurer from among the boys, who has charge of the box, and gives in his account monthly. "Be sure," said one of the boys to me, "to have the box *large enough*,—for the more it holds, *the harder we will work to fill it.*" We have promised each other to make our Sunday-school and the cause of missions the subject of special prayer. "My little children," said Mrs.

L—— to me, "never think of saying their prayers without asking God to bless and keep you, and somehow I feel that children's prayers *mean a great deal to Him.*" "Certainly I believe so," I replied; and as the reflection that so many of us are uniting daily in prayer for our common cause, is full of comfort to me, so, is it not a sweet thought that we are remembered before God in the prayers of his little ones?

The children were very much interested in a letter which I received lately from one of my old scholars in the military hospital, who is now studying for the ministry in one of our Church-colleges in the far West. He was one of those whose sufferings God has overruled to their souls' good in bringing them to their Saviour, and during these three years past I have watched his spiritual growth with deep interest. After giving an account of college-life and his duties there as teacher, he writes, "And now I must tell you something which I am sure will give you great joy, your prayers in my behalf are answered. I have at last decided the solemn question and now entered on my studies for the ministry. Yesterday I passed my first examination successfully, and shall enter the Sophomore class."

My dear friend, should you read this paper to any one who is striving in much weakness to win souls to Christ, bid them take courage; for, as I recall my hesitancy in first approaching him on the subject of religion, and his apparent indifference, and now read his letter breathing such a deep sense of gratitude to God in bringing him to this decision, and of his utter unworthiness and unfitness, I can only say, who can measure the power of divine grace and mercy? He inquired particularly after our Sunday-school, saying that he felt a deep interest in its success.

And so, within a few months, I have had the happiness of knowing that two of the hospital Bible-class are zealously laboring for the good cause in the far West,—L——, the first fruits of our labors there, who is doing all in his power

toward the erection of one of our mission churches in Minnesota, and F——, who is preparing to work as a missionary in Wisconsin. Speaking of the great need of an Episcopal church in their town, and the present reduced state of their funds, L—— writes: "Is it not hard that we must stop midway in our work, for the want of a few hundred dollars? Had we this sum we could plaster the church and make it comfortable for the winter, but unless our Christian friends send us the money *very soon*, it will be too late. People in your section of the country can have but little idea of the difficulties which we have to contend with in striving to build up a church on the frontier. But let it be once established, and it will exert a mighty power in forwarding the interests of our Church in the new settlements. Oh, if our friends in the East would only come to our assistance *now*, I cannot estimate what great things might be effected!" I read this letter also to the children, and said, I wonder how many of these boys will be working hard a few years hence to build up churches, or preparing themselves to preach the glad tidings? "That's hard to tell," said one of the older boys; "but I suppose that boys' and girls' money will help to build the churches as well as grown people's."

I think I remarked, in speaking of the effects of our Bible-class on the members, that I considered it as great a blessing temporally as spiritually, and how marked a change, in many instances, had taken place in their outward appearance and the condition of their dwellings. I try to make the mothers look on cleanliness as a Christian duty, as tending to make home attractive to father and children, and giving to those disposed to pass their evenings in drinking-saloons or taverns, less excuse for seeking their comfort away from home. And the same principle has worked in the case of the children, for I see fewer unwashed faces, and less dirt generally among the boys and girls since we started

the Sunday-school. I do not mean to attribute the change to this alone, but certainly it has had its influence, and children who know what it is to be clean and neatly dressed on Sunday, are not generally disposed to return to the old ways during the week. And do you ask, where does the money come from to buy these new clothes? Sometimes, and often, it is the result of mother's self-denying love which would rather see her little ones well clad than wear the fruits of her hard earnings on her own shoulders. Sometimes—and I tell this giving thanks to God—it is the result of father's savings this month past from ale and whisky; and lastly, I am glad to say, the children have often earned it with their own labor,—cutting rags, picking nuts and berries, running errands, etc. Are you tired of hearing about the children? and do you think me too hopeful of the results of our work among them? Let me tell you one little incident which occurred the other day, to illustrate the interest with which some of my young friends have entered on their missionary work. About a week ago, when walking slowly along the bank of our beautiful stream, I heard a strong voice singing our new hymn, "Jerusalem the Golden." I looked up in surprise, for the sound seemed directly over my head, but nothing was to be seen save the tall overhanging rocks, surmounted with grand old fir- and chestnut-trees. Meanwhile the song went on, till at the close of the line, "There is the throne of David," there was a sudden pause, then a rustling among the branches, and before I had time to escape, I found myself well showered with chestnut burs. Not fancying this part of the programme, I called out to stop. Whereupon the face of my young friend who wanted the missionary-box "made large enough," peered out from among the branches, and after making due apology, he unloosed a tin pail from a bough overhead, and said, "I expect to fill that this afternoon, and I will have as many from the other side

of the hill, and won't that *tell* on the collection next Sunday?"

Now, do you wonder that my heart goes out in love to my little helpers? Is not this something of the true working missionary spirit? For it requires considerable effort on the part of a boy to walk up to the store with his "splendid chestnuts," and, receiving his pay, lay it aside "for the collection next Sunday." Oh, give me the children's hearts and hands, with their daily prayers, and I would not think any field too barren to be converted into a garden of the Lord, any spot too degraded to become, through God's help, the habitation of his Holy Spirit!

Meanwhile the work among the men and women in the neighborhood goes on quietly, but I trust surely. The results of our efforts are not as gratifying nor as evident as they were nine months ago.

There are fewer strangers to be sought out and invited to the chapel, and consequently fewer new faces to be seen at the Bible-class. We have not gained very largely in point of numbers this summer; perhaps thirty or forty new names are added to our list, but I do not consider this as any indication of a decline in the religious interest of our people. When disposed at times to murmur because so few are added to us, I try to remember that the grace of God is as signally shown in keeping faithful those who have confessed their Saviour, as in bringing in others to inquire the way of salvation. And then, again, the work, in certain cases, seems to progress very slowly, and often I have watched and prayed for the conversion of a soul, month after month, without any visible good results. This, as I wrote to you before, is the "trial of our faith," for it is easy to make any exertion or sacrifice when we see those efforts crowned with success, and bringing forth the fruits of repentance and faith on the part of those for whom we pray; but when we seem able to do nothing further than

to gain a man's assent to the necessity and reasonableness of religion, while his heart is unmoved by a Saviour's love, this is, I think, the most trying and discouraging part of the work to the Christian teacher. And here it is well to ask, "How was it with ourselves in other days?" How long we were in coming to Christ—how long we resisted the influences of his Spirit—and this will give us new hope, while at the same time it humbles us that we should have forgotten that the work is not our own, but that "God giveth the increase." Truly, "in due season we shall reap if we faint not."

If one text has been uppermost in my mind these few weeks past, it is those comforting words of the Preacher, "Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days." Several instances are fresh in my memory which testify to their truth. I should like to tell you personally the whole story of the power of "that grace which worketh in us mightily," as illustrated in the case of my friend F——, but much must necessarily be omitted here, and I can only give you a brief outline of my acquaintance with him and of his present condition. Among my most interesting cases in —— Hospital was a young man in Ward K. who was suffering from a severe wound in the breast. During the summer he grew so weak, that I almost despaired of his life, but as the weather became cooler, his strength gradually revived. Meantime I visited him daily, reading to him, pointing him to the Saviour of sinners, and praying with him that if God should spare his life, he might have grace to dedicate it to his service.

One day, on entering the ward, I found a visitor by his bedside, a soldier from another hospital, and so I merely inquired how he had slept, and passed on; but he called me back, and said, "Won't you stay a little while with me this morning? I want my friend F—— to know you." He asked me to read and explain a few verses to him as usual,

after which, I prayed with him. During this, our soldier friend seemed ill at ease, and, after answering a few questions and receiving an invitation from me to attend the Bible-class, he hurried off. Several times after this I met him at C.'s bedside, but he seemed so reluctant to enter into any conversation with me on religious matters, that I did not urge it, and a few weeks later he returned to his regiment. This was all that I saw of him, and all recollection of our short acquaintance had wholly passed from my memory, till a few days since I was reminded of it in a way I little expected.

Some months since, when passing through the mills to make myself acquainted with the newcomers and invite them to the class, I noticed that one of them was watching me closely, and seemed interested in what I was saying. I spoke a few words to him and begged him to join two of his friends who had promised to attend. "Perhaps so," was his reply. When evening came, I found him in the chapel, and from that time he came quite regularly. Meanwhile, I sought opportunity for private conversation, to hear something of his past life and the state of his feelings, but I found him unusually reticent in regard to the former, and I could judge only from the questions which he would ask me in regard to certain doctrines of the Church, and the necessity of openly confessing Christ, that he was considering the great question.

Not long since when explaining to the class the passage, "And when even was come, they brought unto Him many that were possessed with devils," etc., I urged those who were professing Christians to be more faithful in bringing their friends to the great Physician of souls, assuring them that not one prayer offered in faith, one word spoken in love, should be in vain, if they followed it up practically. I noticed that F—— seemed very much affected, and after the class was dismissed, he joined me at the door, and asked if he might accompany me home. On our way, I asked him

several questions in regard to his strivings against sin, his perseverance in prayer, and the change in his feelings towards his Saviour. He expressed himself deeply sensible of his own unworthiness, but added, "Nothing seems so wonderful to me as the patience and mercy of the Lord towards me. I don't believe many men have resisted the Spirit longer than I have;" then, suddenly stopping, he said, "I will keep it no longer,—do you know me?" "I don't understand you, F——," I replied; "I only know you as one of those whom I spoke to for the first time last summer, and one who has been very often in my thoughts and prayers." "Then I'll tell you now," said he. "Do you remember the soldier whom you used to meet in —— Hospital, when you took care of C——? the one who came to sit with him in the mornings when you read and prayed with him?" At first I could recall nothing distinctly, but as he went on, and mentioned different incidents and conversations, all was brought back to me. "And you are this young man? How little we dreamed that we should ever meet under such circumstances!" "I believe," replied he, "it is through the providence of God. Oh, I have so often wished that I could see you again, and that you could talk with me as you did in those days!—my mind has not been at rest since that time, though I've done my best *to make God give me up.*" And then he told me his story, his journeys in the West, his trials, temptations, and spiritual struggles. "Whenever I heard from any of the men in —— Hospital, I would always try to find out where you were, and learning through J. M. that you were in the city, and still teaching a Bible-class, I determined to go there for work, thinking that I might find you, and make myself known to you. I had only been here two days, and had not heard anything about you, till the day you came into our room; and when I saw that it was really the same lady whom I met in —— Hospital, I can't tell you how I felt;

I only know that when you asked me to the class, something said, *Go, F——, God has not* given you up yet." "And why have you not told me this before?" I asked. "I don't know," said he; "I often determined to do so *the next time*, but every time I found it harder to speak about it. I suppose it was the same *feeling of shame* which held me back when you talked to me in the hospital; but when you spoke about 'sowing in faith,' and 'casting our bread on the waters,' I made up my mind to tell you everything, for *I felt you had a right* to know it." I trust to have still better things to tell you about F——. When the struggle of to-day is past, and our prayers shall be answered, his surrender of self, soul and body, to the Saviour, who, in his own words, "would not let him go."

Last Sunday I asked all the children who were working for the mission church in Minnesota to hold up their hands. Nine were immediately raised, and one boy said, "My sister has got more nuts than any of us, but she could not come to-day, so I promised her I'd tell you." Another little boy said, "Mother has got all our nuts locked up." "And what is that for?" I asked. "Oh, she says it's to keep us from temptation, but I'd be pretty hungry before I would eat '*those* nuts.'" "We don't have much chance," said one of my most zealous helpers, among the boys, "for Sunday afternoon is the time when most of the men and boys go out nutting; but father told us not to do anything of that sort, for nuts *picked on Sunday* wouldn't help the mission much." "Father" would not have thought so a year ago, but his views are changed since then, on this, and many other matters.

N——'s wife said to me, when begging her to accompany her little girls to the chapel, "I couldn't think of it, I am kept as busy on Sunday as any other day in the week." "But that is not right, Mrs. N——, your body needs rest as well as your soul." "Rest, my lady!" replied the poor

woman, "I have not known what that is these twenty years; you know my man don't believe in these things, and since I lost my three sons I've had to work, or the thought of it would make me crazy." "But I don't believe," added she, lowering her voice, "that all the work we have done on Sundays has ever brought us in a farthing in *the way of blessing*." I told her that she was right, that we could not look for God's blessing on our work when done in open violation of his law. And then I begged her to bring her troubles to her Saviour, for He would comfort her and give her strength to bear them, which was so much better than trying to forget them. "Let us go to Him *now*, and I am sure He will answer us." And so we knelt in prayer to God, confessing that we had erred "and strayed from his ways like lost sheep," and asking forgiveness, in the name of his dear Son, and that he would overrule and sanctify our present troubles to our souls' everlasting gain. I do not remember when my heart has been so moved with pity as in the case of this afflicted woman. Here was an instance of the many souls to which Christian women may minister. *She* did not want food or clothing, but words of love and Christian sympathy. She was bearing a heavy sorrow *all alone*, and the memory of that sudden, crushing blow seemed sometimes more than she knew how to endure. How could it be otherwise? She needed the comfort of a Saviour's love, the sense of his abiding presence and unfailing sympathy. She knew that she was a sinner, but Jesus Christ, the sinner's Friend, was a stranger to her soul. She felt that her sorrows were very heavy, but she had not yet been taught to "cast all those cares upon One who careth for us."

As I retraced my steps homeward, I thought of the great responsibility resting upon us all as members of the Church of Christ. Is not the command as plain to-day as in the days of the early Church, "*go out* and *seek* for the lost"?

Must we not *carry* the glad tidings to those afar off? Sometimes this duty calls for the sacrifice of personal ease and comfort, but what is that when compared to the sweet sense of doing God's service, of *pleasing* Him who loves us? I can add my feeble testimony that in those cases which demand, on our part, most of faith and prayer and the sacrifice of *self*, God's grace is most freely given; and so I sincerely believe that the time will come when N—— and his wife shall be numbered among the people of God.

A MOTHER CHURCH.

This term is often used by churchmen, either boastfully, playfully, or lovingly; but it is rare to find the measure of self-sacrificing devotion that is needed to make a "Mother Church."

A clerical delegate from the Free Church of Scotland, in a recent address, unwittingly administered a severe reproof to the churchmen of this country for their unwillingness to do honor to the Mother whom they profess to love. It seems that in Scotland they do not deem it any honor to their Mother to deck the church with ornaments, as if it was an idol's temple, or to expend large sums for unchurchly music, or, when the building becomes antiquated, to doom it to profane or secular purposes. This clerical delegate said that each congregation strove to earn the honorable title of "a Mother Church," by planting another church in a destitute neighborhood, not a starveling, but a healthful, vigorous branch, soon to be self-supporting, often outgrowing the Mother, and vieing with her by becoming also a Mother of other churches, as is shown in the following extract from the speech:

"In all large cities no congregation is considered as having done its duty until it has planted a congregation in some degraded district within its jurisdiction. With them parentage is the measure of honor. Every church must be a Mother Church. And many of these churches so established are now the very salt of the earth, lights shining in dark places. Some of them are mighty monuments of the mighty grace of God. You must not think these mission churches are small. One that I am acquainted with has now one thousand one hundred and ten on its list of membership, while seven years ago it had but one hundred and ten. And what is more, this church has become the parent of another, which now has a membership of five hundred and eighty. The city of Edinburgh, with a population of one hundred and forty thousand, has nine churches established in this manner. Glasgow has fifty-eight free churches, of which number fifteen were established by mission-work. One of these churches in Glasgow has been the parent of three others, with an aggregate membership of two thousand five hundred. These churches are not only self-supporting, but they are also self-propagating."

How natural it seems that one redeemed by the blood of Christ, and animated with his Spirit, should at once desire to extend this priceless benefit to others, and yet how rare it is to find a congregation manifesting this spirit! It must be refreshing to see a church that has just acquired independence, sending its best minister and lay-people to found another parish in a more destitute region. Such self-sacrificing love is the offspring of the Holy Spirit; although ultimately it brings its own reward. Workers in such a field have often with tearful eyes thanked God for this privilege, declaring that nothing ever brought their blessed Saviour more closely to their hearts than their prayerful efforts to lead some neglected one to Him.

As public confession is one of the marks of the Episcopal Church, may not the following avowal be made by many congregations? "We virtually excluded from our Church the very classes that first received the Saviour of mankind, and that He most honored when on earth; and when they became corrupt, we tried to satisfy our consciences by giving them temporal relief. Their children were received into our schools, although we knew there was no place for them in our church, and when we opened a chapel for the poor, very few of us were willing to leave our Sunday luxuries to follow the example of our Lord by worshiping with 'the common people.' We gave them alms instead of heart-felt sympathies, and then upbraided them for ingratitude when they became paupers."

Is it not better to make this confession here, whilst amendment is possible, than to have it wrung out hereafter by One who thus forewarns us, "Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me"?

There are persons who have torn themselves away from the most effective public services and preaching to aid in building up the waste places of Zion, but these instances are so rare that there seems to be a saintliness in such sacrifices. The writer of a series of four papers, of which the following is the last, illustrates forcibly what a stranger, without wealth or family influence, can effect, when her minister bids her Godspeed and gives her counsel and oversight.

If each new parish had a band of such workers, it would soon become not only self-supporting, but "a Mother Church," by pushing out enterprising and zealous workers into regions far beyond. This will soon be, if the readers of these records of Christian woman's work will pray earnestly that the Holy Spirit may stir them up to a like zeal. W.

Dear Sir,—Among those who meet around the table of our Lord next Sunday, will he found (D.V.) my friend H——, one of the members of our Bible-class. He had not been long in this country before I became acquainted with him, and invited him to join our class, which he did about six months ago. He was brought up in England, and had thought seriously on the subject of religion before coming here. But, as he said, "No one ever showed any interest in my case, or gave me instruction in those things which I needed to be taught, and I had not the courage to ask for myself. If Christian gentlemen would only notice a poor man as he stands by the church door, and make him feel that he is not *in the way*, but is *welcome*, it would do a great deal towards destroying this feeling; but I know that I have been into churches where they made me feel I had no business there." "Perhaps this was partly your own imagination, H——," I said,—"though I think we are very careless of our duty in this respect." "Oh, I don't suppose," replied he, "that they meant to hurt my feelings; but I've been made to feel that I *was poor*, in the *church*, more than in any other place. The first day I went to the class, and you asked me to come to the evening service, and your minister told me how glad he was to see me there, I hardly knew what to say. I don't think that I can feel the same towards any other church as I do to our chapel." He had been confirmed in England when still a boy, but it made no deep impression on his mind; and now that he had been brought to see and feel his own sinfulness, and to know of the love of God in Christ Jesus, he desired openly to confess his faith in the Saviour. "I cannot feel," said he, "that my confirmation was any more an act of faith on my part than my baptism." I pray that the Holy Sacrament may be blessed to him, not only as the confession of his repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, but also to the refreshing and strengthening of his soul.

It has been plainly shown that in the church-work which lies open to Christian women, some fields call for the highest talent, and others for the energies of those possessed of only medium ability, who bring loving hearts and willing hands to the service of our Lord and master. I think that the truth applies not only to natural gifts and the means at our disposal, but to that talent which so often we forget is not our own, but only lent us for a season,—I mean *time*. There is no plea more commonly used to excuse ourselves from active service in the cause of Christ than the want of time.

Many whom you may have convinced that, to help forward the work, it is not necessary that we should be "remarkable" in any way, will make this their unanswerable argument,—*want of time.*

Of course this is true in a great many cases. Our first duty is to our families as to those whom God has given us; but I believe that if those of us who have not these responsibilities would conscientiously devote even one or two hours each day to visiting the poor, caring for the sick, inviting children to the Sunday-school who now are receiving no religious instruction, and attending to those already brought in, we should soon see the fruits of our efforts in the increase of our numbers in the Sunday-schools, and the growth of religious feeling generally. Do you not think that Church-work is too much confined to the few more zealous spirits in each congregation? I have often heard the remark made by Christian ladies, "I understood that —— was ill, or that —— was in destitute circumstances; but I knew that M—— visited in their neighborhood, and that she would attend to them." I cannot see how M—— visiting in the neighborhood can release us from our obligations as *individual* Church-members; neither can I believe that we are justified in neglecting our duties on the plea that others will perform them as well, or better, than

we could. God has opened to us so many ways of doing good, that if we feel ourselves unequal to undertake one work, there is surely another not far off and waiting for us, if we only desire it enough to ask, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"

The mission field is not confined to the outskirts of the town, the neighborhood of factories, nor the more degraded parts of the community. Many have not the time nor the courage to undertake this branch of the work; nor is it necessary that they should, in order to be active and useful laborers in the vineyard. There are men and women, whom we meet almost daily, who supply us with the necessaries of life, who work for us, sell to us, sew for us, and look upon us as their friends, to whom we have never spoken a word on the subject of religion. We take a kindly interest in their welfare; are ready to listen to their recital of domestic cares and pleasures. They speak of their children, their plans for this one and the state of that one's health. Did we ever ask if those children go to Sunday-school? if that father himself attends church, and tries to live as a Christian? Do we feel that our relation to one another is something more than that of buyer and seller, employer and seamstress, and that these men and women have *souls to be saved?*

No, I am sure that we do not half realize this; for if we were more conscientious in this respect, there would be fewer of this class so neglectful of their own salvation. A word spoken here and there, a little persuasion on our part, may lead to much good. A book or tract given with the request that they will read it as a favor to us, may lead to better things. For my own part, I have been surprised to find how many of this class, whom I have known either personally or by name, for years, are yet without Christ, waiting to be called in.

A few days since, when conversing with some of the

women employed in one department of our mills, a young girl entered the room, and took her seat beside the others. Before leaving, I reminded them of the class that evening, and begged those who were strangers to join us. Turning to the newcomer, I asked her name, and invited her to attend if it were not too far from her home. "No farther for me than for you," was her answer. "I suppose, then, that you live in the neighborhood of A——?" I said, as many of her companions came from that direction. "No, indeed, Miss ——; don't you remember that old cottage, three doors from the corner of N—— Street?" "Certainly," I replied, "it is only a few steps from my own house." "I know it," said she, "and we have lived there for three weeks and more; and the children often watch to see you pass, and wish you would stop at our house. My little sister said, that she thought if you went two miles to visit N.'s family, you *might come round the corner to see us.*" "But I did not know that you had moved into this house," I pleaded as an excuse for myself. "That's what I told her," said she; "and mother says you would find us out sooner if we lived three miles off, than if we lived close by. I have always noticed," continued my new acquaintance, in a tone which expressed her disapproval, "that you Church-people seem to think more of the poor who live a long way off, than of us who live close by. I suppose that is because *they think that they can attend to us at any time.*"

Was not this a reproach, and not undeserved? for in my anxiety to make myself well acquainted with those residing in the vicinity of our chapel, or such as N.'s family, who lived at a distance from any place of worship, I had unwittingly passed one case at my own door. All that remained for me was to visit this family at once, which I did. The children were glad to receive an invitation to the Sunday-school, and I promised to call for them on my way to the church. Their mother said, when I asked her

where she attended church, "I ought to go to the Episcopal, for my parents were members of it, and I believe that I was baptized there, but I have not entered a place of worship these many years. The fact is, we soon get into the habit of staying away, unless *there is some one to remind us* of what we ought to do; ladies, with plenty of servants, cannot understand *how many good excuses we can find* for staying away."

"But," said I, "if you know what your duty is, these things will not excuse you, in the eyes of God, for wholly neglecting his worship; and besides, does not the sight of persons passing by your windows on their way to church, and the sound of the church-bells, *remind* you that you ought to keep the Lord's Day holy?" "Yes, I know it, and I've often *thought* of these things; but it seems so different when any one *speaks* to you about them. I will try to do better," she added, "and perhaps I can get M—— and my oldest brother to come with me to the chapel. I think that he only needs *to be asked.*" "If this be the case, he shall not stay away from church another Sunday for want of an invitation."

"I am delighted," said W—— to me, "with that book you gave me a few weeks ago." "Which was that?" I asked; "for you know so many books pass through my hands that I cannot remember what I give each one of you to read." "I think you ought to remember *this*," he replied, "for you have talked to us often enough about it." And he drew forth a Bible from his pocket. "Why," said he, "I got so interested in it, that I spend most of my evenings reading. One thing is strange," he continued. "I find that this is just like the one they use in the Methodist church at B——, and I had been told that every Protestant church *had its own Bible*, and I supposed that was the reason why there were so many denominations. I had heard that the Bible House was the best place to buy

one, but I did not know what *was the name* of the one in the Episcopal Church, and so I did not get one, for I didn't want to appear stupid." Do you believe me when I tell you this? I assure you that I am telling the simple truth.

W—— is an American and an intelligent man, but his parents are Roman Catholics who came to this country about twenty-five years since, and who, though not caring enough for their Church to attend themselves, or to send their children to the Sunday-school, had yet instilled into their youthful minds, as part of "the faith," a store of prejudice and falsehood in regard to the doctrines of the "heretics." And so it was that the young man was as ignorant of the Word of God as one living in a heathen land. What he had heard in his short course at the public school was by this time nearly forgotten, and only within the past year has he felt a desire to have a Bible of his own, and read for himself. Not liking many things in the Romish Church, and having this early prejudice against Protestants, he had deemed it the safest plan to keep away from all. It was the first instance that I had ever known of a man who had reached the age of thirty without having read a chapter in the Bible, and who yet was possessed of some education, and fond of reading; but, as W—— said, "a Bible is generally the last thing that a man who does not care much for *such matters* will think of buying, and you are not apt to meet with Bibles or Prayer-Books in such rough places as I have lived in."

I told you, when speaking of our evening Bible-classes, that the mothers were often prevented from attending by the children, who could not be left alone; and sometimes this excuse was given when disinclination was the true cause of absence. But it would be unjust to the children did I not tell you, on the other hand, how often they have been the means of bringing their hesitating and unwilling parents to the house of God. There are instances fresh in my

memory where God has overruled untoward circumstances, and answered my prayers for certain ones, in a way I least expected, making what seemed the chief obstacle to the furthering of the good work, the very instrument by which He would accomplish the end we desired, making these little children the unconscious ministers of his love to perishing souls. One who has passed through heavy trials said to me yesterday, "I am fairly discouraged, and have made up my mind never to go to the chapel again." "And why should you feel so?" I asked. "Have not the services and Bible-classes been a comfort and pleasure to you? I hoped that they would help you bear your troubles, and make life happier to you."

"Oh, you cannot understand it," she replied; "your troubles are not like ours; we have brought ours upon ourselves; God never sent them to us; and," she added, "when I go to the chapel and hear the Bible read and explained, it gives me new hope; but when I come home to the old trials, they seem harder to bear than ever." "I do not wonder that you feel discouraged sometimes, but I am sure that God has brighter days in store for you, if you will only put your trust in Him; and besides," said I, turning to the little child who was standing at her mother's knee, and looking up wistfully into her face, "you would not deprive *her* of the greatest pleasure she has, the Sunday-school?" At the sound of the magic word, the little one's face broke into a smile as she exclaimed, "I know! two days and then comes Sunday, and mamma takes me to church to hear the music, and put my money into the box." "Poor little thing," said her mother, "it will be hard to refuse her when Sunday comes! Is it wicked in me to wish that she might be taken before she knows what trouble means?" "I think," said I, "it would be better to bring her to our Saviour, and ask Him to take care of her, and keep her as his own." And then I spoke to her of his

great love and tender sympathy for all our sorrows, and comforted her tired heart with his unfailing promises. So I left her. Passing by her door towards evening she called me in, and said, "I have thought better of this matter, and I want to tell you that I see I was wrong in saying I had no friend to care for me, for I believe that God cares for me and my little girl, and I am sure that you are my friend, or you *would not have told me about these things.*" There is the truth again. We do not realize how much the tempted and heavy laden among God's children need to be "told about these things;" and if we would leave a blessing behind us, we have only to point them to Jesus, the Saviour and Friend of sinners. Among the most interesting of my Sunday-school scholars are the three little children of Mrs. E——, whose husband keeps a drinking-saloon. I hardly expected that she would allow them to attend, as she is a Roman Catholic, and added to this, as I told you before, our mission-work has taken away some of her husband's best customers. I called at her house a few days since, and told her how well her children were doing; "Indeed," said I, "your little girl is an example to many of the older ones, for good conduct and attention." She seemed pleased with what I said, and after alluding to the singing, I asked her if she would not come to the chapel next Sunday and hear the music. "Would that be called going to church?" said she. "No," I replied, "I should call it going to Sunday-school." "Well," was her answer, "I would not like to have it said that I went to your church, but I think it's no sin to go to hear my own children sing. A woman of my age can't well begin over again, *but there's the children*, and if you can make anything out of them, you are welcome to do so; and, after all, *it's better to work on the young people.*"

"'Tis never too late to begin a new life, Mrs. E——. Jesus called the little children, it is true, but He also invites

the fathers and mothers to come unto Him and be saved." "I know it," she answered, "but when a woman has followed one course for forty years and more, it is hard to put new ideas into her head; but the children may choose for themselves, and there's not much doubt which way they will go." She paused, and then, bending over the baby, said, with tears in her eyes, "I trust they may come to something better than we have done." I can but feel that what this poor woman said is true; for while I would never despair of the power of God's grace, I am sure that the work is easiest and most permanent when engrafted into the heart of a child, growing with its growth, and strengthening with its strength. How I wish that we had a parish-school for these children, that the full system of Church-education were carried out in every congregation! Then these stray lambs should be fed and nurtured, day by day, on heavenly truths, and the teachings of our beloved Church should be a part of their daily bread. Then the Church should be, indeed, as a *mother* to her children, nourishing them with the sincere milk of the Word in their tender years, and training them to find it their meat and drink to do the will of their Father in heaven. Shall *we* live to see this day, or is it one of the blessings still in store for these little ones?

This morning I visited my friend J——, whom I mentioned in one of my former letters to you. He has been confined to his bed for nearly two years, from the effects of paralysis, and yet I always find him cheerful and resigned to God's will. It is such a contrast to come from the lower part of the town, from the neighborhood of factories, taverns, shops, and drinking-saloons, to this quiet and secluded spot, that it seems almost like another world. His cottage stands by itself, on the bank of the river, with no other dwelling in sight, and there this aged man is calmly waiting till his Lord shall bid him come up higher.

He never tires of hearing about our mission-work, and asks about the scholars, their temporal and spiritual welfare, with as much interest as if they were his personal friends. "There's only one thing that I can do for the cause," said he, "and that is what you were reading about this morning: 'Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that He will send forth laborers into his harvest.' I certainly have time to do that; and," added he, with trembling voice, "it makes me feel that I am *still one of you*, to remember you every day in my prayers."

His wife said to me, "J—— enjoys those books which our minister lent him more than any reading which he has had for a long time," and she showed me half a dozen numbers of THE SPIRIT OF MISSIONS; "I had no idea that there was so much to be done." I thought to myself there are many of us equally ignorant of these matters, and with far less excuse. "Oh," she continued, "it must be such a *happy feeling* to be able to do something to help on the work!" I reminded her that He who said to us, "Work while it is called to-day," had also bade us "Watch and pray," and "Wait on the Lord." But as I consider the blessedness of doing even such an humble work as God has given me, and then think what a terrible struggle it would be to lay it aside, and sit with folded hands while our Church goes on conquering and to conquer, I feel that we cannot be thankful enough for the privilege of laboring in his cause.

CHRISTIAN ZEAL AND TACT.

A FEW extracts from an invaluable book by the Abbé Mullois, who was one of the chaplains of Napoleon III., will serve as an appropriate introduction to the fifth sketch of a zealous woman's single-handed and effective work in a rural mission. Mullois's book is entitled "The Clergy and the Pulpit in their Relations to the People," and it should be carefully and prayerfully studied by the clergy and laity of our Church, as it is eminently spiritual and practical.

"One of the glories of Christianity is its zeal in ministering to the wants of the body. . . . But of what avail is it to succor the body, if the soul is neglected? Of what use is it to go forth proclaiming charity! charity! if the soul, the most sensitive and suffering part of mankind, is abandoned to endless misery? Who can fail to be touched with compassion at the sight of so many poor creatures who drudge and wear themselves out, who go and come, who endure and curse, unconsoled and hopeless?

"The greater part of them, notwithstanding, are not vicious. Some are ignorant; others are led astray; many waver between the good and the bad, only waiting for a kindly word to be addressed to them,—for an outstretched hand, for some great stream of good to pass by them, and carry them away in its current. How gladly would they follow it! Well, be it ours to create such currents of truth and virtue. Be it ours to confront human errors and passions, and to arrest their onward progress.

"I fancy that we stick too closely to our own snug corners, and to our own ideas. Yes, we stand apart; and, regarding the world's progress from thence, we naturally find that it goes on most unsatisfactorily.

"We should confront the invading vices and lusts, come to a hand-to-hand struggle with them, and cry out to them

with the mighty voice of God, 'Stop! stop! you shall not carry away these souls, for they are not yours, but Christ's; He has bought them and redeemed them with his blood!' If such courage, such resolution, such vigor as this was more common among us, the aspect of the world would speedily be changed.

"But how should this zeal be carried out into practice? That is the important question. In the first place, associations should be formed. In these days we cannot dispense with them. Society must be taken up in detail, ameliorated part by part, and then formed into a compact structure; for a good community can only be composed of good elements. These objects may be attained through the medium of associations. There should be such for all ages; associations of children, of apprentices, of operatives. They benefit all, the members and the directors also.

"How comes it that there are not associations of young apprentices in all the towns of France? How comes it that any town dares be without one? What strange beings we are sometimes! We surround children with the most tender and assiduous care up to the time of confirmation, and then, at the most critical age, when their passions begin to cross them, we launch them forth, without support and without counterpoise, into that pestilential atmosphere called the workshop; and then we wonder and say naively that they do not persevere in the right path! Pray, can they be expected to persevere when thus left to their own resources? You, with all your religious knowledge, with all your acquired virtues, with all your experience and age, would you do so in their place? I defy you to persevere under such circumstances.

"Moreover, no town should be without its association of operatives. There can no longer be any excuse on this head. They exist elsewhere, are in active operation, and

effect much good in many places. The way to form and direct them is well known."

Would that it were well known in the United States and in our churches! The following additional extract shows that their experience in France is precisely like that here. Effective workers are not obtained by public appeals, but by enticing them to use heart-power.

"You say to a worldly woman, 'If you were to occupy yourself a little in good works, such as visiting the poor.' Forthwith she starts a thousand objections against the suggestion: 'What! I, in my position? I really have no leisure. I have my house, my children, my servants, and so many other things to attend to. Then, my health is so wretched, and my husband cares for nothing. Besides, it is a woman's first duty to look after her domestic concerns.' In a word, she instantly bristles up with good reasons. You encounter a pointed defense everywhere, and no gap to admit your arguments. Beware, therefore, of reasoning with her. Go straight to her heart; beget charity within her; make her to feel, to love; and soon you will hardly recognize her as the same individual, for the change will be almost instantaneous, and every subsidiary stumbling-block will disappear. Then she will go and come, suffer, be humble, self-denying, exemplary.

"Woman is called the feeble sex. True, when she does not love; but when love takes possession of her soul, she becomes the strong, the able, the devoted sex. She then looks difficulties in the face which would make men tremble."

This statement has been verified by these articles on woman's work, and its truth would be still more apparent if the shrinking of these devoted women from beginning the work had been vividly pictured. W.

My dear Sir,—I rejoice to tell you that one of the difficulties which weighed heavily upon my mind, when I

last wrote to you, has now been removed. I allude to the matter of a place of resort for our young men these winter evenings, where they can pass a pleasant hour in reading, or any innocent recreation. A laboring man, after his hard day's work, needs some relaxation, something to cheer and enliven him; and especially is this the case with our young men, who are separated from their families and homes. Indeed, where they live with their parents, in too many cases *home* is the last place for them to find comfort or social pleasures; and where shall they go? Many have said to me, when begging them to avoid the taverns and lager-beer saloons, or asking how they were tempted to enter such places, "I did not intend going there when I left home; but I grew tired of sitting about, with no one to talk to, and so I went out for a walk." And so it was, that, passing by the place of temptation, he was stopped by some acquaintance, who asked him where he was going, and receiving the answer, "Nowhere in particular," he invited him to join their party, and you know the rest. Now, had there been some suitable place provided by the Church for such as these, they might have been weaned from their careless companions. We all crave society and relaxation of body and mind, and men will have it, if not in one way, then in another; and if there be no respectable and innocent way of amusement open to them, they will too often accept what first presents itself. How often have I devised plans to supply this need! But beyond inviting two or three at a time to my house, to entertain or instruct them for an hour, or to give them a little music, I have been unable to meet the difficulty. Of course, I have not felt the same anxiety about the women of our neighborhood and Bible-class; for a woman finds, in the use of her needle, a source of amusement which is denied to men. I have often had occasion to be very thankful that the younger members of my woman's class had this pleasant and profitable resort,

when their day's work in the mill was over; for when the mind is occupied with some piece of sewing which interests without fatiguing us, there is little temptation to seek for entertainment outside. How often have I wished that the half-worn, outgrown finery, which it is so common a thing to bestow upon the poor, might be exchanged for plain, suitable material, which the mother and the young girls could sew upon during winter evenings! I may take too strict a view of the case; but I confess that many a piece of soiled finery, among the articles sent me for distribution, has been consigned to the fire, or converted into material for rag-carpets.

But I did not intend to give you my views on the question of suitable or unsuitable charities. I wished to tell you that the want of a resort for young men has been supplied, to some extent at least. Through the energy of our pastor, our church has provided for the needs of her hitherto neglected and estranged children in this respect. What a help it would be to Church-work, if each congregation would supply a reading-room and improving companions for those who have not such privileges within their own reach! And why should we not receive these pleasures from our church? Is not that name, in too many minds, associated only with dry sermons and religious teaching, and regarded as wholly separate from, and in opposition to, anything like pleasure? We know from experience that there are times when mind and body are quite unequal to any work involving serious thought and close application; and at such seasons, a pleasant game, or music, or the intercourse of friends, is not only refreshing, but needful. Then, why not receive such pleasures from the Church? Why should not that dear name be coupled in our minds with innocent amusement and pleasant occupations, as well as with the solemn duties and responsibilities of life? I am sure that our reading-room will have the effect of drawing nearer

together the members of our Bible-class; for there they will meet, socially, those whom they only knew before as attending the same services, and receiving the same course of instruction.

In spite of the inclement weather, and the almost impassable condition of some of our back lanes and streets, our classes have been well attended, and the new year finds several names added to our list of scholars. During the past year we have held one hundred and twelve Bible-class meetings in our chapel, and I think that in only three instances have we been prevented by the weather from holding them. The work progresses meanwhile, though sometimes I am disposed to feel that it goes on very slowly and with many discouragements. But, as there is a bright side to every picture, so there is much to make me hopeful and thankful in the constancy and prayers of some of our young Christians. These dark days, when provisions and all the necessaries of life are so high, and work is so scarce, have brought want and sorrow to many of our people. As I read almost daily in the papers how this or that mill has stopped, or discharged half the hands, my heart aches for those who depended on this employment for their daily bread. Indeed, I enter their houses very often with a feeling of dread, lest the first words which shall greet me shall be, "Father is out of work." In consequence of this scarcity of labor, some of the most constant attendants at my Bible-class have moved away, and I miss their help very much in the Sunday-school, as well as their influence in our midst. Others are sitting idle because no man hath hired them, waiting for brighter days with a cheerfulness which only the grace of God can give.

Oh, what a blessed privilege is vouchsafed to those who have the means of relieving the wants of such as these, of strengthening the faith of the poor, who have asked in the morning, "Give us this day our daily bread," not knowing

whence it should come! I have been very much gratified to see how kind and thoughtful many of our people have been toward their neighbors who were out of employment, sending them a basket of coal, a loaf of bread, and cheerfully *sharing* with them their provisions, though liable at any time to have their own work taken from them. Several of the women have succeeded in obtaining work from the Dorcas Society, and their small earnings are, for the present, all that they can depend upon for the support of their households. I could hardly restrain a smile, though it told a sad story, to see, on entering their houses, strong, active men holding the baby, or amusing the children while the mother was hard at work with her needle. One of the men said to me, "I told J—— (mentioning a friend who, like himself, was without work, and playing the part of child's nurse) that we never fully appreciated our wives before. I prefer working in the mills to rocking the cradle." A young man, who has attended our Bible-class very regularly for a year past, left us, about two months since, on account of an offer of higher wages in an other place. He asked me, just before leaving, to give him a Prayer-Book, small enough to carry in his pocket, as he "liked to read it here and there." When I bade him good-by, I said, "S——, I think we shall soon have you back with us again; so I will not take your name off the list of scholars." A few days since, on my way to the chapel, I overtook S—— going in the same direction. As we walked together, he said, "You were right in what you told me about my coming back to M——; I would not have believed that I could have missed anything so much as I have the Bible-class. Oh, I tell you that I felt lonely, when those evenings came, that I knew you were all together in the chapel; and I've made up my mind that I had better stay here, on lower wages, than lose the Bible-class." Another said, when I expressed surprise that he should have been with us that evening,

knowing how hard his work was, and what a distance he had to walk, "I begin my work an hour earlier these mornings, so as to be with you. It seems to me, when I am in my corner here, I should be content to *sit still for a week,* and *just be talked to.*" However, I do not propose to try the experiment with him.

I stopped to-day to visit Mrs. H——'s little girl, who has been quite sick, and to inquire if her husband had yet succeeded in obtaining work. They live, you know, in L——'s tenement-house, with four other families. It is a strange old place, the entries so dark and narrow, and the staircase turning in so many directions, that before I reached the summit I had quite lost my way, and had to look back for the faint streak of light from the window over the entrance before I could be sure which was the front room. In course of conversation, H—— said, "I like our new neighbors so much; I mean Mrs. R——; she is so *quiet* and *lady-like;* but she has had a sight of trouble since they moved here." On inquiring, I learned that this family had occupied the upper rooms for five weeks past. I had known Mrs. R—— before, when she lived in the neighborhood; had invited her to join our class, and begged her to induce her husband to attend our services. She promised me to think of it, but it resulted in thinking alone. Meantime, my attention had been so engrossed with the Sunday-school, and with certain individual cases of special interest, that I neglected to visit Mrs. R——, and remind her of her unfulfilled promises. I had reason to reproach myself for my neglect when I called on her to-day. She seemed glad to see me, and said she had often wondered that I should pass by so often, and go in and out of the house, without stopping at her room. Her husband had been severely ill for three weeks. "Once," said she, "I almost despaired of his life; and oh, how lonely I felt then, and how I wished that you would come to see us and talk to

him!" "And why did you not send for me?" I asked. "I thought of doing so several times," she replied; "but I knew that I had done wrong in keeping away from church, and so I felt ashamed to."

She told me gradually of her sad experience: her early life, and happy home, which she left so young, and the change which followed, bringing with it sickness, death, and destitution. "And what has given you strength," I asked, "to bear all this?" "I hardly know myself," she replied; "but I suppose that I have lived through it, as many others do when they find no way of escape. I used to feel alone in the world, but now I have some one to care for me." As I looked at her sweet face, which told, better than words, its tale of patient suffering, I longed to take her from that cheerless room, and surround her with the comforts and refinements of life, for she seemed so strangely out of place. But if this may not be, at least I have it in my power to visit her and show her kindness. Yes, better still, I can tell her of our Saviour, and try to bring both her and her husband to Him. Oh, I believe that upper chamber shall yet become a place of prayer!—that souls are waiting there to be taught of Jesus, and his love to sinners! Is it not a blessed privilege to carry the glad tidings to God's weary ones, and bid them "Cast their burdens on the Lord, for He careth for them"? If, in this out-of-the-way, quiet spot, so many cases of interest are to be found, such diversity of character and experience, what strange stories might be told by one visiting in the courts and alleys of our crowded cities! Do you remember C——? I think that I mentioned his case to you as one of peculiar interest; but nothing that I could say to him on the subject of personal religion seemed to make any impression upon his mind. He was apparently so indifferent to the whole matter, and any reference to it seemed so distasteful to him, that sometimes I found it very hard to know when to speak

and when to keep silence, fearing, on the one hand, to lose any favorable opportunity of speaking a word in season, and, on the other, to offend him, and make the subject disagreeable to him. But the Spirit of God is mighty when we are weak, and prayer is our unfailing resource at such times; and so you will not be surprised to learn that for some time past C—— has attended the classes and the evening service regularly, and yesterday brought three of his friends with him. I went through one of the mills to-day, in hope of seeing these friends of his, and telling them how pleased we were to have them join us. In this I was disappointed; but I found several who were strangers to me, some of whom had but recently arrived in this country. Among them were two brothers, Englishmen, whom one of my old scholars pointed out to me, saying, "There are two as likely young men as one need see; I have known them ever since they were little boys." After telling me something of their history, he added, "I advise you to speak first to the younger. He hasn't been long away from home, and he left a good mother behind him. What you say may *remind him of her*, and make an impression on his mind."

Following this suggestion, I presently stopped at the loom of our young friend, and, after a little conversation about his work, etc., I said, "How glad you must have been to find B—— here! He tells me that he has known you from your childhood, and that your mother is an earnest Christian." "That she is," replied A——, "and she tried her best to make us boys the same; but I'm afraid that will never be." "Not without the help of God, A——," said I; "but in his strength we can do all things." "That is just what *she* used to tell me; and I did try once to be a Christian, but there is not much use to do so here." "Only try, A——, and you will find the grace of God as mighty to save in this land as at home. Have you been to church

since you arrived here?" "No," said he; "I felt strange, and did not know where to go. I heard the men speaking about 'Bible-class, and going to the chapel;' but I could never find out from their conversation where it was, nor where the service was held." I soon informed him on the subject, and told him how glad we should be to have him join us that evening. "Then *you* are the teacher?" said he. "Well, I believe that mother's word will come true. She said, when we left her, that she did not feel troubled, for she had *put us into God's hands*, and she believed that He would raise up some Christian friend to take an interest in us. And there's my brother," he continued: "couldn't you persuade him to come, too?" "Perhaps both of us together can. I will invite him, and you must encourage him to join us. Your influence and example will do a great deal." "My brother," replied the young man, "has seen a great deal of the world. He has been in the army and on long voyages, and is pretty wild; but I think he may come, if any one will ask him." While we were speaking, the brother passed by; A—— spoke to him, and told him that he had found out about the Bible-class, and meant to attend that evening. "And we want you to come with him," I added. At first he hesitated, and said that he "had not visited such places of late years." "Then," said I, "it will be the best news which you could send your mother that you have begun again." I then spoke more seriously to him, of the long-suffering goodness of God in bringing him safely through so many dangers, and urged him to begin a new life. "I make no promises," said he; "*but I take it very kind on your part to interest yourself in us.*" The younger one promised to attend, and told me that he did not think his brother would refuse to come with him. "At any rate," said I, "we will *pray* that he may not refuse." Was it not providential that I should have met these young men so soon after their arrival in this

country, and before they had formed any intimacies with their careless companions? I suppose that never are a few words of kindly interest more fully appreciated than when we are separated from home and friends, strangers in a strange land; and so I shall hope that our few words by the wayside may lead to some real good.

And meantime, perhaps, you ask, "What has become of Mrs. R——? Did she or her husband come to that class, as you hoped?" No, neither of them, though I watched and hoped for them till the services were half over; but it was not meant that I should so easily gain my desire. Yesterday I visited them once more, and found them both at home, as Mr. R—— was not well enough to leave the house. When I inquired the cause of their absence, Mrs. R—— colored deeply, and said, "I don't think that I *promised* to come, did I?" "Well," said I, laughing, "it was something very much like a promise; you told me, 'I will *try* to come, and bring Mr. R—— with me;' but I dare say there was some good reason for your absence." "No, there was not," replied her husband; "and I'll not try to excuse ourselves; it was all my fault, for I would not let her go, neither would I go myself, *because our clothes were so shabby*. I suppose you think that is very weak for a *man* to say; but it's the truth, and I may as well own it. No," said he, "I used to attend church, and hoped some day to become a member, and I was fool enough then to believe that every professing Christian was a good man; but I was ruined by one who called himself my Christian friend, and from that time till I came here I have never seen the inside of a church. My wife took it so hard that, to please her, I went to the class a few times. I really meant to have been there Sunday; but just before leaving the room, I looked at her clothes, and then at my old coat, and said, 'Well, R——, we wouldn't have believed, three years ago, that these should ever be our Sunday suits.'

I said it just to make her laugh," added the poor fellow, "but somehow I always seem to blunder; so we concluded to stay at home, and she read to me out of your Prayer-Book; and now I have told you the whole story." I felt it very important to control my feelings, as it needed but the "last drop in the bucket" to make Mrs. R—— give way, and so I said, "You must show me that old coat, that I have heard so much about; perhaps I may think it quite stylish." So he produced it, and after having a good laugh over its resemblance to Joseph's coat of *many colors*, "Now," said he, "do you wonder that I stayed away?" "Yes, I wonder that you never thought of wearing two vests, and your thin coat instead of this one." At these words their little girl, who had been sitting quietly in the corner, jumped up, clapping her hands, exclaiming, "I told him so! I told him so! If he only wanted to take me to Sunday-school as much as I wanted to go, I knew he could find something to wear; but I never thought of *that*." "Poor little thing," said her father, bending over her, "papa never thought that he would stand in your way to going to the Sunday-school, and being a good girl." "And by God's help he never will," I added; "let us pray together now that He will make the way plain to us." Before leaving them, I turned to the little girl and said, "I shall depend upon you to see that papa is warmly dressed, so that he takes no more cold." "Oh, yes," said she, seizing his hand, "I'll dress him up, and make him look as he used to before he was sick; and every one will say, 'Why, look at Mr. R——, he is getting well again;' and I won't say a word. Won't that be funny?"

Our hearts told us that it would take more than *clothing* to restore the look of health to that sick man; but a new day is dawning on him; my first petition in their behalf has been answered, for that upper chamber *has* been sanctified

by prayer; and who of us shall doubt that God has good things yet in store for them?

I have written this to you, my dear friend, while every incident is fresh in my memory; and now, as I glance over these pages, I fear that it may seem too simple, too childish, to have its place in the THE SPIRIT OF MISSIONS. And then again, I think the Church is calling loud to-day, not only for the mighty men of valor to go forward in the good fight of faith, but saying also to the simple, and those that have no strength, "Gather up the fragments;" "My grace is sufficient for thee,"—and such as these it may incite to labor and pray for the salvation of souls.

Sister, is there not an unsatisfied desire in your breast? Are you vainly trying to make the spiritual fire burn more brightly by mere church-going, when your divine Master is urging you to be up and doing? With Christ in your heart and on your countenance, you will find ready access to all, and spiritual refreshment that will give you true happiness.

TEACHERS' RECORDS.

WHAT seeker after Christ and his Church is not profoundly grateful to the "Teacher come from God," for the record of his private interview with Nicodemus? That revelation of life-giving secrets, unknown even to a "Master of Israel," has brought many to the new birth, and should induce the lesser teachers to record God's ways with "all sorts and conditions of men."

How encouraging to both teacher and taught to know that, like the invisible and life-giving air which we have breathed from our first birth, the Holy Ghost is ever exerting its vivifying and sanctifying influences upon the im-

mortal nature of all men! How comforting to "little ones," still feeble in the faith, because just born of water and the Holy Ghost, to learn that the Christian Church is bound to manifest parental forbearance toward the erring, and to bestow upon the weak and sickly more than maternal tenderness! How assuring to every conscious sinner is the complete fulfillment of the prediction made to the proud and timid Pharisee, that the life-giving power emanating from a crucified Redeemer would be as simply and freely offered to all, as were the healing virtues of the brazen serpent when lifted up by Moses! The moving power of the Cross is strikingly illustrated by Nicodemus, who, keeping the words of the great Teacher in his mind for one or more years, was powerless to break away from his Christless companions, until Jesus was lifted up upon the Cross; and then we see him in open day confessing Christ, by bearing a hundred pounds' weight of spices to honor his Master at a time when the faith of Apostles was sorely tried. It seems that the rich and honored ruler, and the poor and despised thief, were equally dependent upon the Cross of Calvary to bring them to the new birth; thus revealing to teacher and sinner the secret source of all spiritual power.

The monthly records in THE SPIRIT OF MISSIONS, of the Holy Spirit's strivings and successes in neglected places and obdurate hearts, through the agency of ministering women, have awakened gratitude in many breasts, and incited their equally timid sisters to honor their Lord by engaging in similar work under the guidance of their respective ministers. One rector writes that his appeals from the pulpit for workers in a ripe field were inoperative, because of the self-distrust of untrained, truly refined women, until the monthly exhibition of what just such women were doing stirred up these timid ones to a like zeal. He further said, "Formerly none of these women could have brought themselves to have made a prayer, or even to read a prayer, be-

fore another person; but now they are doing substantial good in a quiet way." And he concludes by saying, "It is work in the Spirit of Christ, after the example of Christ, on the part of all our people, that is wanted, and must be had, to make our Church glorious in this land; therefore, I hope these contributions will be continued indefinitely."

The chaplain of a large military hospital, in which the subject of the following narrative was born of water and of the Spirit, has recorded his testimony to the inestimable value of the work, by godly women, that came under his supervision. Although he is an humble, holy, eloquent man of God, whose ministrations to the dying were most acceptable, and whose sermons were listened to attentively, yet no Nicodemus sought him out even in the dark. The gravitating influence of two thousand ungodly, convalescent soldiers was so strong, that convicted hearers waited for some more convenient season before openly confessing Christ; thus checking and stifling the Holy Spirit's work. This humble man of God mourned that his official position often hindered him from reaching the finer sensibilities of these rough men, and also that his previous training and experience had special reference to the pulpit, and to ministrations by the bedside of the dying. He felt so ill at ease, and his manner was so constrained, that his efforts were unsuccessful in trying to catch the sympathy of careless and reckless soldiers, who are exposed by day and by night to the jeers of their associates. The recorded doings of the great Teacher and of his Apostles showed him how much even *they* had been aided by women, in preparing the way for their ministrations, and in nourishing and watching over feeble converts to Christianity. The chaplain, therefore, rejoiced when the military authorities, yielding to strong influence, allowed him the assistance of one, and subsequently of two more, earnest women, who, at much

personal inconvenience, gratuitously served in the hospital, not as nurses, but as Christian teachers.

In this associate mission, the chaplain was the preacher and the consulting physician in spiritual things; whilst his helpers, like the resident physician and nurse, spent much time in the wards, that they might get a thorough knowledge of each man's history, and of his spiritual ailments and needs. Under the general direction of the chaplain, these voluntary and self-sacrificing visitors were enabled to deal successfully with very many who had resisted all approaches of the salaried religious teacher, and such were gathered into the daily Bible-classes, instructed and prayed with separately, and prepared for baptism, confirmation, and the Lord's supper.

Although only one of these ladies had any previous experience in such work, and many facilities were denied to them, owing to the strict military rule in this hospital, yet the chaplain testified that the efficiency of his ministrations had been increased more than tenfold by their help.

Though these teachers now plead for the destruction of these hasty and imperfect records, they are too good for such a fate, as they will certainly prove instructive to beginners. W.

A.D. 1863.

K—— came to the hospital last June; he had been wounded at Chancellorville, and was so far recovered as soon to be able to get about. He was always bright, intelligent, and gentlemanly, ready to listen to what I had to say on the subject of religion, and to acknowledge its value and importance, saying he hoped to be a Christian some day or other, but he was not ready yet: he would sow his wild oats first. During the first few months of his stay at the hospital, I had many long and earnest conversations with him, and he came occasionally to the Bible-class, but when

there showed no interest in the lesson, and seemed altogether so unimpressible that, again and again, I gave up his case as beyond the reach of such efforts as I could put forth, and renewed those efforts only from a stern sense of duty.

One day towards the first of December, as I was going through the ward, I was about to pass K—— with some commonplace salutation, when I noticed he had risen from his seat, and was holding a chair invitingly towards me. I sat down and soon introduced the usual topic, when he told me he had been feeling very differently the past fortnight, that the thought of his past life was painful to him, and he had several times resolved to do better, but he added that these thoughts and feelings soon passed away. Oh, what an answer to my prayers was here, and what a reproof of my unbelief! I eagerly availed myself of this opening to show that the Holy Spirit was striving with him, and should be instantly hearkened to and obeyed; that the recollections of a life spent in carelessness and forgetfulness of God ought to be not painful only, but agonizing; how much more so when that life had been one of willful and deliberate sin! At the close of our conversation, he promised to come regularly to the class and to pray; he soon became more decided, prayed twice a day, and expressed the determination "to try hard to be a Christian, if the old fellow (meaning Satan) would let him; but he had a terrible hold on him."

The following extracts are from my diary: K—— is quite sick; he seems really in earnest about his soul, but says "the devil has a pretty firm hold upon him, and he feels he has undertaken a pretty big thing." December 21st. K—— still quite sick; read to him the parable of the prodigal son, and after a few explanatory remarks, said, "Can you think much of these things, now you are sick?" "I never thought so much about them as on Friday and Saturday nights; all my past life came up fresh before me,

—all the sins I had committed." "A black record! a heavy load!" "A big load indeed for me!" "And to think of bearing that through all eternity!" "I could not do it,—at least to feel as I did those nights." "What did you do then?" "I resolved to do better." "And prayed, I hope, for forgiveness?" "It seemed to me I had sinned too much to be forgiven."

I told him of Jesus, the Lamb of God, whose precious blood cleanseth from all sin,—repeated many such sweet and comforting promises as, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool,"—reminded him of the parable just read, and directed his attention to the beautiful illustration of the pardoning love of God, in the father, who, seeing his son *afar off*, *ran* and fell on his neck and kissed him.

K—— says he has been as wild as the wildest lately; has gone as far as any one in the hospital in all kinds of wickedness, but feels that he has reached the point at which he must break off; that he must break off *now*, or he shall not be able to do so by-and-by; he hopes to be different for the future. "But, do as well as you may for the future, that cannot blot out the past; there they stand, all the sins of thought, word, and deed committed against God,—what will you do with them?" "I believe all that has been provided for." "You mean through a Saviour's blood?" "Yes, that's what I hope."

It is not worth while to detail the daily conversations which were now held. Whenever his health would allow, he was in his place in the class, and gave evidence of sincerity and earnestness. I found that some time before he was wounded, whilst leading a wild and reckless life in the army, he had a dream which alarmed him greatly, making him realize the inevitable consequences of his wicked ways, and leading him to resolve to amend them. Consequently,

he left off swearing, card-playing, etc., led a moral life, and prayed twice every day for three months. Then followed the battle and his wound, which was not dangerous; he was sent to a hospital, and feeling that there he was safe from further danger, he gave up prayer, returned to his old ways, and gave himself up to unrestrained indulgence in every sinful pleasure that offered.

The same vivid imagination which thus awakened him in the army was again God's agent; for it was half dreaming, half waking, that the review of his past life, with visions of demons and the place of torment, was first brought before his mind's eye a few weeks ago.

But, though thus inaugurated, his religious life was to be marked by stern grappling with realities. Conscience, now enlightened by the Word of God, revealed to him the exceeding sinfulness of sin as committed against a God of infinite purity and love, and humbled him in sincere contrition at the feet of a Saviour so long slighted and rejected. His chief desire was, not to flee from the consequences of sin, but to escape its guilt and power. Like the Apostle to the Gentiles,—when the commandment came, sin revived, and he died,—he realized the enormity and hideousness of his transgressions and cast himself in utter self-abasement before God. Yet, amid the thunders of the Law, the still, small voice of gospel joy and peace was heard, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest." He accepted the loving invitation; the blood of Christ cleansed him from sin, and he sat at the Saviour's feet a trophy of his love and grace.

January 5th.—Found K—— reading in Oxenden on the Lord's Supper; the chapter, "Who are invited?" I said, "Are you invited?" "I would not be a welcome guest." "What is required?" "This little book says 'repentance.'" "Don't you feel sorry for your sins? Would you be willing, if you could, to go to heaven with your sins?" "I

can't imagine the possibility of such a thing; I could not believe that God could pass them by." "Well, if you could live on in this world in your sins, and get to heaven at last, would you like to do it?" "I think not. I think there is more true peace and happiness in the Christian's life than in any other." "You do, then, feel really and heartily sorry for your sins, and desire to give them up?" "Indeed I do." "Do you feel any love for your Saviour?" "Yes, I am sure I do." "If you do repent of your sins, trust in Jesus' blood and love Him, is it not your duty to give yourself to Him publicly in baptism, and thus profess before the world that henceforth you are determined to be his faithful soldier and servant to your life's end?" "Yes, I have been thinking that such was perhaps my duty, but I am very ignorant and need instruction. I feel that baptism is for Christians, and I know that I am not a Christian."

"Baptism is not intended for the advanced Christian; it is the door of entrance into the fold,—the Church,—where the child of God will be fed and nourished, sanctified, and strengthened."

January 6th.—After I left yesterday, K—— says he examined himself, and finds he has no true love to God, it is only fear,—a dread of his wrath; is afraid, even whilst engaged in prayer, of God's vengeance against his sins, which he feels to be so many and so great. He finds it is a difficult thing to be a Christian; he used to think it so easy that he could almost make himself one; that it was only necessary to make up his mind to do it and the thing was done.

Referring again to his doubts and fears, he said he does not doubt the power and willingness of God to save, but thinks He will take his own time for it; that He will not forgive now, in order to make him feel his sins more deeply. He seems to himself to be in dark woods, with dangers and difficulties all around, and a bright light shining be-

yond; but he can't tell how to reach it. I said, "Jesus stretches out his hand to you through the darkness. Just put your hand in his; He will lead, guide, bless, and save you. Let Him do it; take Him for your all in all. Look at your sins as much as you please, you can never sufficiently realize how many and how great they are. Yet invariably follow it up by looking at the Cross of Christ, and seeing that, though your sins may be high as heaven, deep as hell, the pardoning love and mercy of God are higher and deeper still."

January 8th.—K—— hopes he is making progress, seems to be getting nearer to God, but feels that he is still very far off. I spoke to him again of baptism, alluding to the requirements for it,—repentance and faith,—and asked, "Do you feel really sorry for your sins? Are they a weight and a burden to you?" "Indeed, they are; I feel them more and more; they are like great mountains, stretching away like the Alleghanies." "Do you believe in Jesus,—that He is able and willing to forgive all?" "Yes, I know He is, but I can hardly believe or realize it." "Yet Jesus himself says, 'God so loved the world that He gave his only-begotten Son, that *whosoever believeth in Him* should not perish, but have everlasting life.'"

January 9th.—Again talked with K—— about baptism; he feels it to be a duty, and hopes to be baptized at some future time, is not sufficiently sure of himself, has seen so many backslide; fears he might do so too, etc.

I exhausted all the arguments I could think of to show that the reasons he gave for not being baptized, were the very ones for availing himself of the benefits of that ordinance. "Are you weak?—thus will you gain strength. Are you fearful of turning back?—thus will you set up a most effectual barrier against so doing. As well might a poor man hesitate about accepting an offer of partnership with a rich and prosperous one, because other business men

had failed or became dissipated, or because he had no capital. Baptism is a covenant of partnership between God and the sinner; the latter has nothing to bring to it but himself, sinful and weak beyond the power of words to express; yet himself, just as he is, he offers to God. And God, on his part, takes him as his child, cleansing him from sin in the blood of Christ, and pledging himself then and thenceforward to give him abundantly of the influence of the Holy Spirit, to support him in all dangers, and carry him through all temptations. What presumption, then, when the great and mighty God thus condescends to enter into intimate relations with the wretched and undone sinner, for the latter to hold back! What an insult, when we know from the Word of God that baptism is a means appointed by Him for our growth in grace, to refuse and say, 'I prefer growing in some other way'!"

Baptism was to be administered the next morning, and when I bade him good-by on Saturday evening, the question was undecided. I felt that it was a critical period with him, a turning-point in his soul's history, and never did I pray more earnestly and perseveringly than that night, for the illumination of the Holy Spirit to be shed on him abundantly, making clear the path of duty. God heard and answered my prayer; for in the morning, on my arrival at the hospital, I found K—— waiting for me, to say that he had decided to be baptized, that he had prayed earnestly, had felt that God would direct him aright, and now knew it to be his duty.

He has often told me since that he thinks if he had not been baptized then, he would undoubtedly have given up the attempt to live a Christian life, and have become more reckless and wicked than ever before.

I might give some very interesting details of his subsequent religious experience, which has been unusually deep and varied, and his progress in knowledge and grace, which

have been wonderfully rapid. I will merely mention one incident. One morning, about a fortnight after his baptism, he told me that, the night before, he had been ill in body, more ill in mind. A print-seller had been in the ward; he had made some purchases, for which he had not yet paid, when the man suddenly left, evidently under the impression that all was settled up. K—— immediately followed and paid him; but the incident gave rise to painful reflection, for his conscience told him that, a short time ago, he would have been quite satisfied to let the man lose his money, as it would have been through his own carelessness. Thus his sins were brought to remembrance, those of his whole life; he felt that he had had health and abused it; he had had an intellectual talent, which he had wasted and impaired. Thus he recalled one sin after another, till he felt that he could not be forgiven, that he deserved that God should forsake him,—nay, that God *had* cast him off and forsaken him; that he was helpless and hopeless. For four hours he prayed without ceasing, yet without one ray of hope. He wished for me, feeling that God *had* given him up, but that he had not sinned against me as he had against God, and perhaps I could comfort him. Suddenly, in the midst of his agony, he seemed to hear a voice saying, "The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin," and forthwith the tempest in his soul was stilled, and there was a great calm.

When K—— became a Christian, he was filled with the most earnest zeal for the salvation of his fellow-men, and has from that hour to this been engaged in the work of urging others to seek that Saviour who is so precious to his own soul. He soon established the nightly reading of the Bible in his ward, and not long afterward, after a severe conflict with himself, was enabled to follow it up with prayer, most of the men in the ward paying strict attention during the exercises.

He is now a ward-master, and makes his influence as a Christian to be felt by every man under his care, not only conducting public religious exercises in the ward, but talking privately with the men on the concerns of their souls, and praying with them in his room when he finds them seriously disposed.

It is his one aim in life to devote himself to the service of his God and Saviour, and to this end he studies diligently whenever he has a leisure moment, intending hereafter to enter the sacred ministry.

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Several years have passed since the foregoing incidents were noted down at the urgent solicitation of a fellow-worker in the same military hospital. Since that time the mother in spiritual things who first drew the ungodly young soldier from the way of death, and turned his feet to the way of life, has never ceased to strengthen him with her prayers, and to encourage him with her letters and with supplies of suitable books. His home is in a rural district, among a very wicked people, far away from Church privileges; therefore the watchful supervision of an experienced Christian is almost a necessity. His perseverance in preparing for the ministry of the Church, and his zeal in establishing a Sunday-school and conducting religious services, meet with the cordial approval of his bishop and of the clergy in that section of the country. Having a wife, and also a mother partially dependent on him for support, the work of preparation has been slow, and in this he has endured much hardness uncomplainingly. He knew nothing of the preparation of these notes, and lest he should see them in THE SPIRIT OF MISSIONS, permission to publish them was asked of him by letter. The following is his characteristic reply:

"The notes of which you make mention are at your command. If anything in any way connected with me

can be made useful in furthering the cause of Christ, I shall be only too thankful."

ADVANCED SPIRITUALISM.

In these troublous times it is cheering to note an obvious advance in the effectiveness of lay ministrations, wherever the highest spiritual powers of cultivated Christian women have been fully developed by exercise in the divine art of winning souls, and their work sustained by appropriate public services in the Church.

When the great wrong of virtually excluding large classes of the people from our scriptural Church became glaringly apparent, it was natural that her *emotional* members should first arouse themselves to remedy this wrong, and that the unrest in the Church occasioned by the zeal of these ardent, impulsive men should serve to awaken the great conservative body of churchmen to a sense of their duty to less favored brethren. If fully aroused, the Church will make rapid strides; for her children have high intelligence, good social position, and other elements of power, as well as a complete organism.

The mode by which all classes of people can be drawn from spiritual lethargy or flagrant sin, incorporated into the Church, and efficiently watched over, is no longer the great unsolved problem. The system and instrumentalities of the Church are found to be well adapted to this work wherever her children are willing to give personal service in accordance with God's requirements, and to follow the example of our Lord and Master in showing kindness to and worshiping with men of low estate.

A small band of just such ladies as are still employed in

many parishes, for financial purposes, in competing with sewing or trading women, has been trained to use their highest spiritual powers and their varied experiences, in Christianizing the homes of the neglected and neglecters of their own souls. This character of work has been pro nounced successful by all who have examined it thoroughly. In three parishes, very dissimilar in location, appliances, and surroundings, nine hundred houses of working people are regularly visited, with a marked improvement in many of them; five hundred women are organized in mothers' meetings; and three hundred and seventy-five men gathered into Bible-classes taught by three of these lady visitors. In one of these fields where this work has extended through seven years, over three hundred adults have, through this agency, been brought to Christ, well instructed in the Bible and Prayer-Book, grafted into the Church, and watched over with such loving assiduity that a very remarkable degree of faithfulness has been secured. In other fields the spiritual progress is equally satisfactory, as is shown in the following sketch of a Bible-class, composed of independent working men, collected by one lady in a sparsely-settled district.

Other departments of the work are still more satisfactory, for youth of both sexes being retained in Bible-classes, become in large numbers living members of the Church; some aiding their teachers by procuring new members for the class and watching over the less stable, while several young men are preparing for the sacred ministry.

In no case has there been such a concurrence of favorable circumstances as may be found in many other parishes, therefore the full power of the Church in her aggressive work has not yet been manifested. Those who have had the chief oversight of these experiments have rather desired to show what was possible everywhere, than how much could be effected in any one field. W.

My dear M——: I scarcely know where to begin to reply to your "letter of queries" about my Bible-class,—your questions cover so large a field, that to answer them all, would require more than the limits of a letter. But I will try to tell you what "may prove helpful and suggestive." Your sphere of operations may be very different from mine. I labor under some great disadvantages, which are more than counterbalanced, in my estimation, by the fact, that I worship in a free church, to which I can cordially welcome all whom I meet, and that not to one service, especially provided for the poor, but to *all* the services held in the church. On the other hand, we can offer people no *ministerial* oversight or influence, as our mission can only claim a Sunday afternoon service and sermon from the clergyman, and we have a service in the morning by a candidate for the ministry, who reads a sermon. The clergyman's time is engrossed with the duties and responsibilities of another charge, and we can expect from him no parochial work, except to bury the dead, or an occasional visit to some one very ill. This I premise, because you might otherwise think we "take too much on ourselves;" for in a thoroughly organized parish, the clergyman, of course, would take the initiative in many things which have fallen into the hands of lay-people with us. Our mission is peculiarly an example of "woman's work in the Church;" the only gentleman connected with it is superintendent of the Sunday-school, and otherwise engaged except on Sunday.

I think you were in the city rather more than two years ago, when I held the first session of my class, numbering three men, in the house of a shoemaker, near the church. In three months it numbered ten, and we were too many for one room. It was then removed nearer the church, and it has continued to migrate until we now have space to seat ninety; and yesterday it was my privilege to have eighty-three present. There are about one hundred and

twenty-five on the roll, collected without patronage or any other pecuniary inducement; all are working men, chiefly mechanics, some well skilled and with good, plain education, —some just able to maintain themselves from week to week at carpet-weaving or kindred employments, in the factories within a mile of the church. Every grade of intelligence is to be found among these people, who represent almost every Christian denomination, and even semi-infidels and Mormons. There are three master-machinists who employ respectively from fifteen to sixty men; there are men who can scarcely read, a few who cannot write. I state this to show the difficulty of answering your questions: "Had you any plan or method in organizing your class? Did you invite in a general way, or did you specify what it was to be like, and what you expected of them?"

The modes of reaching the men are as multiform as their occupations, — always varied according to circumstances and opportunities, yet *never general*,—each invitation to come to the class is given individually, and presented in the way most likely to attract that individual. "All things to all men," if we would win souls to Christ. One is invited to join the class to receive instruction in the best things; one is invited to come and see "what a class is like, taught by a woman," which, by the way, has drawn several who are now regular attendants. One is told "it is a class in which scholars take part, ask questions and state their views;" another is assured "he can sit quietly and listen without any danger of exposing his ignorance." One is asked to come because "he will find some of his friends there who enjoy the class;" another, who feels isolated in the country or neighborhood, is urged to "come and form a Christian association;" and so I might go on, for as I look on my roll-book I am reminded of the various ways by which different members have been won, and I can truly say no rule will do for all. In every case, however, they

are told that the purpose of meeting is to study together that Word which is able to make us wise unto salvation. I will send you, in another letter, a leaf or two from my journal of specific cases, which may interest and help you. I am always unwilling to receive a vague promise of coming "some time;" and if a man tells me he has an engagement for next Sunday, and for the next also, I claim the first disengaged Sunday, make a note of it, and if he is not there I visit his house that week to see if he is sick or in trouble, as he has failed to keep his engagment. If he comes to the class at the time appointed, I always notice it, sometimes commend him for his punctuality in keeping his promises, and secure his name as soon as possible on my roll. Sometimes the latter is refused or postponed,—he is "not prepared for such a step, but will come." In a few more Sundays I ask if I shall call his name as a member, or he himself says, "You have not called me."

This brings me to my custom of roll-calling, which I have only had for the last six months. As the class received a sudden impetus about that time, the old members said they wanted to know all who came and give them welcome, but did not like to ask a man abruptly, "What is your name?" then I concluded to give a few minutes to the roll-call. Each answers to his name, and I recommend this to you especially, as it helps to make those who sit side by side familiar with each other. When one joins us who is strange, he is at once introduced to some two or three who are likely to be social with him or useful to him, and placed in some sense under the friendly care of one in the same neighborhood with him. The latter calls for him on Sundays, or reminds him through the week of the class, until he is identified with us, and he, in his turn, brings some one else. I do all I can to weld the class together by socializing it, by asking one to call and see another who is absent or sick, or by making one the bearer of a note, or

book, or message to another. I feel that much more is needed in this direction, and I am planning how a reading-room can be provided for their use during two or three evenings in the week. If this project succeeds, or fails, I will let you know at some future time.

You ask my "mode of teaching, and how I manage to keep up their attention." That is the marvel to me. The teaching is as simple as it possibly can be. Notice is given of the lesson for the following Sunday and the study of it urged, but I am afraid this is done by few. I read the portion aloud, each man has Bible in hand, and then I teach just as in a Sunday-school class, giving an explanation, verse by verse, varying it or aiding it by Scripture references, while one or another reads, all the class turning to the place, and thus acquiring what I think valuable,—a habit of manipulating the Book from which all spiritual nourishment is drawn. I ask questions, sometimes, of a general nature, and of all the class; sometimes an explanation of a verse from some man whom I think ready or desirous to answer questions. Sometimes a difficulty which I know to be in the mind of a man is met by my asking a question of his neighbor; this brings out the mind or sentiments of two or three others in a discussion which may last five minutes. So far, I have been able to hold the check-reins, and to control perfectly any spirit of debate; but for a young teacher like yourself I should think it undesirable to try this mode. It interests me, and helps me to individualize the class, and know the status, intellectual, moral, and spiritual, of each man, as I could not if I were the only querist. Scarcely a Sunday passes without one or more questions being propounded to me, foreign to the lesson. If a very brief reply will do, I give it; if not, I ask the person to wait till after class, and then I have the privilege of explaining and enforcing Christian truth to him alone. After thus going over the lesson, I gather it all up,

if a narration, making it as graphic and vivid as I can, and then close with *the* practical truth to be drawn from it all. It is important always to make some *one* point, to have some central idea in all your teaching, and thus to avoid generalities. Illustrate, when you can, from every-day life, from events of the day, matters which come under your observation, or facts in history; group around your subject as much life as you can. Never let your class separate without having pointed them to Christ as the Way, the Truth, and the Life. I close with prayer, generally selected from the Prayer-Book, and, after a hymn, call the roll; one hour and a quarter is our limit in time.

I generally keep one of the class for private conversation and prayer, sometimes at his own request, to have some passage of Scripture explained, or to talk of his own *spiritual* condition and interests, or to tell me of some joy or sorrow in his household or his business. You would be amused if you could know all the "experiences of life" poured into my ear, and brought to me for sympathy and for advice. On Sundays, however, I try to keep all secularities out, and press the claims of a crucified Saviour home to the heart with earnest entreaty if my friend is not a Christian, and give such counsel or help as may edify and build him up, if he is already a disciple. We never separate under these circumstances till we have knelt together at the throne of grace. This prayer, with one person, is always extempore and special, and it makes a deep impression; often a man lingers after the others have gone, to ask me to pray with him.

You ask if I visit them regularly at their homes? The most discouraging part of the work, the *only* discouraging part, is the difficulty of seeing the men during the week. Many of them ask me to come at their dinner hour; but it is usually unsatisfactory. I rarely go to their houses for a *visit* at this hour, unless invited to do so by themselves or

their wives. I sometimes look in for a moment, and speak a friendly word, and leave a tract or hymn-book; this serves to familiarize them with me. I have sometimes gone to their workshops and factories, and, in the midst of the noise of machinery, have had five or ten minutes' conversation with some one who had been absent or seemingly indifferent, which has resulted in more regular attendance and more attentive hearing. They think it such a mark of interest in a lady to come to a noisy, dirty mill to look after a poor working man, that it is little enough they can do to accept her kindness, and return her visit by going to Bible-class on Sunday. But I have far exceeded the limits of a letter, and must reserve the full reply to this and other queries for a future time, when I will give the promised extracts from my diary, that you may see how special cases have been successfully treated. Ten of these men have progressed so far that they teach in the Sunday-school in the afternoon, as well as go to Bible-class in the morning. The prayerful study of God's Word has been signally blessed to the awakening and strengthening of their souls.

When I am disposed to shrink from the responsibility of imparting religious instruction in the cottage, by the wayside, or to large classes of women on Thursday evening, and to men on Sunday, I am reassured by the recollection that my responsibility will be fearfully increased if I decline to use any knowledge of the Scriptures that I can acquire, for the benefit of the less favored people who swarm around our city. Words and acts of kindness to men and women, springing from the heart, make them docile learners, even in cases where there seemed to be the most persistent refusal to attend public worship. Small beginnings make it easy to the most timid and self-distrustful teacher, as she always gains confidence with the growth of her class.

THE BANISHED.

"God doth devise means that his banished be not expelled from Him;" and women wiser than her of Tekoah are now successfully pleading for those who are virtually expelled from God's house. These prayers bear the only true test of sincerity, for the women offer themselves to aid in seeking out and restoring the "banished," and in making them welcome in the family of Christ. They also obey the apostolic injunction, by "comforting the feeble-minded, supporting the weak, and being patient towards all men." These women manifest the Spirit of Christ, by remembering that it is written, "The stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself."

The following paper, being the extract from a diary promised in the letter on Men's Bible-classes, illustrates one of the many modes by which "the stranger" is sought out and the "banished" is restored to Christ and his Church. W.

September 25th.—While paying a visit to Mrs. R—— today, a respectable-looking woman, with a child in her arms, came in and seated herself nearly opposite me, taking no part in the conversation, but listening attentively to what I was saying, as well as to the few Scripture verses I read at the close of my visit. I was coming away, when she said, "I saw you coming here, and I came on purpose to see you. I told Mrs. R—— I would get you to see what you could do with my man, to get him to go to church." Her own excuse for not going was her family cares, which were indeed numerous; but she said, "I never was so regular in going as my husband was in the old country; he was never so happy as at church and Sunday-school, and in

the four years in this country he has only been once inside of a church." She told me he had been a Sunday-school teacher for many years at home. He had found folks here so cold and unsocial, etc. I promised to call and see him some Sunday; she begged I would give no intimation of her having spoken to me of him.

26th.—After six o'clock P.M., I knocked at her door, and in response to the call, "Come in," I passed into their back room, where the family were all seated at tea; with apologies for not having opened the door, she begged me to be seated. I said I had not time, it was mothers' meeting evening, could she not manage to come up to it with Mrs. R——? She repeated the excuse I had already received, and I said, "Well, then, you must introduce me to your husband and I will give *him* an invitation." He rose when he heard my name; said he had heard of me, was glad to make my acquaintance; and I said, "My time is too short now to talk; I invite you to come and see me on Sunday morning, and, after Bible-class, we can get acquainted." "He did not know,—he did not think he could come,—he did not go to such places *now*." I seized upon the *now* and asked, "Did you use to go?" "Oh, yes, in the old country always." "Coming to a new country, away from the old home influences, you did not think religious privileges needful; you can get along without religion here; is that it?" "Indeed," he said, "it would seem just the reverse; but I have been very neglectful; I will come some day and tell you how it has been with me." "I shall expect you next Sunday, then." "I have made an engagement for that, but the Sunday after you will see me."

October 6th.—Mr. E—— was at the Bible-class according to promise, and said, "He would not promise to come always, but liked it well enough to give his name for my roll-book as a member for the class."

13th.—Disappointed not to see Mr. E——. Called in

the week and heard from his wife that he had been much interested in the way the class was conducted, and really sorry that some company had prevented his going last Sunday.

20th.—Mr. E—— again with us. I introduced him to B——, and M——, and W——, as a stranger who had joined our little company, and I hoped he would feel at home with us. In the afternoon I stopped for M——, to go with me and see G——, who was in much affliction at the loss of his lovely child. After paying that visit, I said, "I am going to see E——, to get better acquainted with him; suppose you come in with me for a little while." We found him reading, and he said he had been looking a little into the morning Bible lesson. M—— asked "How he liked the class?" "Very much; he intended to come regularly; he wished he had known of it sooner." After a few words of warm invitation to church, I was about to leave, when he asked if I "could stay for a quarter of an hour and talk with him?" "Of course I could." M—— left us alone, and Mr. E—— said, "I want to tell you how far off the track I have been. In four years I have been only once inside of a church." He had never been a communicant of the Church at home, but for many years had been a constant attendant on Church services and a teacher in the Sunday-school. He had felt it an especial trial, in coming to this new country, to leave those beloved associations. On settling in Philadelphia, he had found no Church of England service near him, had delayed for a few weeks going anywhere; but one Sunday, Bible in hand (because in the old country he had always read the lessons from the Bible in church), he went to the place of worship nearest to him. He walked slowly up the middle aisle and back again. Not a pew door was opened, not a welcome hand put out to him; nothing but a stare, as if he were an intruder; this was very different

from his own church at home, where every stranger was welcomed warmly. Going at length into "the most insignificant seat" he could find,—the last pew in the church,—he thought he would at least be undisturbed; but three ladies came to the door, looked as if they thought him impertinent, crowded him in the corner, sang with evident satisfaction from *their* hymn-books, never noticing that the stranger at their side had none to sing from. He left the church, little profited by the services, determined never to enter *that* building again. He said no one could have an idea of the chill such a reception gave a stranger in a strange land. He hoped I, as a teacher, might use this as a hint to Christian people of the value of courtesy and kindly feeling in the church.

Furthermore, he added, "In the four years I have been in the country, no one has ever invited me to go to church,—no one has ever asked if I went to church at all,—no one has ever spoken to me of my soul till you did. I have worked in machine-shops with men, professors of religion, scores of them, and have often wondered they took no interest in this; but to this day, you are the first and only one who has approached me on this subject."

Much more he said, acknowledging frankly that he was without excuse for his neglect of public worship and other Christian duties; he had not felt happy, especially of late he had realized he was going down-hill. His life-long devotion to the cause of temperance had kept him from the snare of drink, and thus far his outward morality had been preserved; but he was utterly careless as to Sunday observances, and was *adrift.*

He thanked me warmly for my interest in him, and hoped it would be for good; he would be in church next Sunday. We prayed together, and I left with him a little book, "Come to Jesus."

It is nearly five months since he first came to the class.

One absence only is noted, and I find "S," for sick, in my book on that day. On the fifth Sunday I asked if he would supply the place of an absent teacher in the Sunday-school. He did so gladly, and now has a class of his own. His serious attention was very evident about two months ago, and I said one day, "I want very much an opportunity of conversation with you." His reply was, "I was going to say the same to you to-day; I cannot get on without help." I had written several notes to him, had called at his house and had brief conversations with him; but now his attendance at church twice, and Bible-class and Sunday-school, left no time on Sunday; I therefore appointed for him to come and see me at my house, a certain evening that week.

He came, and began at once to say, "that he needed help; he could not understand himself; he was unhappy; but one thought in his mind night and day. He could not stand where he now did; for days he had been "praying for light, for guidance, for forgiveness, through Jesus Christ." His great distress was caused by his failure to realize that fullness of joy which he had supposed *must* be felt by every forgiven sinner. It was a great relief to him to pour out into a sympathizing ear his perplexities and anxieties and struggles, and it was very touching to me to see the strong man bowed down by a sense of his own helplessness and of his need of a Saviour. I made no full note of the conversation; but one illustration gave him comfort and struck him forcibly. "Suppose you had been nearly drowned, and battling almost hopelessly with the waves which had well-nigh overwhelmed you, and a mighty deliverer, at imminent hazard of his own life, snatched you from your peril and had placed you upon a rock far above the surging waves. Standing there safe, but wet and shivering, would you have distressed yourself because you did not immediately feel warmth and comfort? Would you

not gratefully look to your benefactor, and trust that the same love which had saved your life would give you the things needful for its preservation,—would clothe you and warm you and feed you? So trust the loving Saviour; he will warm you with his love, strengthen you by the influence of his Holy Spirit, clothe you with the robe of his righteousness, feed you from his Holy Word. Thus will you grow in grace and in the knowledge of his will, and enjoy that peace which He promises to give. Look off from self; look ever to Jesus; trust Him, love Him. 'He that spared not his own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not *with Him* freely give us all things?' "

Troubled by thoughts of sin and by his old habits, feelings, and associations, which seemed to cast him down into a state of hopelessness, and make him doubt his acceptance, I said, "Suppose your queen had graciously sent for you and had adopted you as her son, and given you the full privileges of sonship,—would you expect at once to rid yourself of habits of thought and expressions usual to you in your former lowly sphere? Would you expect at once to adopt with ease courtly phraseology and sentiments, adapted to your new position? You would not distress yourself with the fear that you had made a mistake, and that her Majesty had not adopted you. You would trust her royal word, and put forth every energy that you might adapt yourself to the new state of life in which you found yourself. You would use every means she placed at your disposal to discipline yourself and learn what you ought to be and to do. Just so with you now; your heavenly Father has placed before you the means of grace, prayer, the reading of his Word, the ordinances of his Church. Use them diligently and you will realize more and more the preciousness of being privileged to cry, 'Abba, Father.' "

I found he had not talked freely to his wife on the sub-

ject of religion. "I see," he said, "I have been very selfish,—I know she must have observed a change in me, but, satisfied with that, I have never told her of my purpose, God helping me, or said a word to her about her own soul. Tell me anything you think I ought to do. I have told my old friends that I have become a church-goer, and have *resolved to give the Lord all of his own day;* but I shall go further now than that." Family prayer was proposed. "Thank you for that suggestion; yes, I must have a family altar." "When will you begin?" "It is too late to-night, for I find it is ten o'clock,—but to-morrow we will begin." After prayer for God's blessing, and the leading, sanctifying, and governing influences of his spirit, we parted.

When he reached home that night, for the first time in his life he knelt in prayer with his wife, and every night since, with wife and children, he has had family devotions.

Three weeks ago he said he wanted to bring his two American children to the same privileges his English children had enjoyed, by dedicating them to God in baptism. He said afterwards that he felt at the font that he then and there renewed for himself those solemn vows taken for him in infancy. He is prayerfully considering the question of confirmation, having some little difficulties in his mind which I feel sure will all be dispelled in time. He is honest and thoughtful and earnest. I think it unwise to hurry him; he is very attentive at Bible-class, and I find it very easy in the course of the lesson to aim some especial truth at him, which I know must find a lodgment, and will convince him some day that he ought to be in full communion with the Church. This shows how ripe is the harvest, only needing that the sickle be put in. When you pray that the Lord of the harvest may send forth laborers into his harvest, will you not also pray that your eyes may be opened to see if some work is not at your own door which *you* can do, to bring near the glorious day when all the kingdoms of this

world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ? Ask your minister or other experienced Christian worker to aid you in your first efforts for the salvation or the spiritual comfort of others. The beginning may be ever so small,—the disposition and the pleasure will grow as you exercise the Spirit of Christ that is in you.

THE PREJUDICED.

The successes recorded in the following and similar papers reveal a way by which the great outlying mass of prejudiced adults can be first won to Christ, and then grafted into the Church.

All who are in the flesh are subject to prejudices that narrow the access to the mind and close the heart; but, as the uneducated are specially exposed to this baleful influence, every orderly mode of benefiting this large class should be carefully considered. It has been satisfactorily demonstrated that many who had strong prejudices against certain churches or ministers, were so free from prejudice against *religion,* that its claims were readily admitted and its blessed influences yielded to in heart and life when divine love was commended gently, perseveringly, and prayerfully. W.

G——, a young man of uncommon gentleness and loveliness of character, had, through his three years of army life, kept free from the customary vices of the soldier, and was consequently fully persuaded that he had done all that was required of him; he had no sense of sin and no realization of his need of a Saviour. At one period of these three years he had prayed, having promised that he would

do so if delivered from danger on a certain battle-field. This he looked upon as rather a meritorious act, and not at all as a precious privilege, or as the approach of a sinner, poor and needy, to the alone fountain of pardon and grace.

He was severely wounded at the battle of Gettysburg and brought to the hospital. He was but one among hundreds, and though I talked with him frequently and lent him books, this made no particular impression on him for some time.

He resumed the habit of prayer on the day he was wounded, but his prayers were of the same stamp as those formerly offered,—entirely devoid of any sense of sin or of need. After he came here and I had talked with him often, he expressed some interest in the subject of religion and a desire to live a Christian life, and was glad to read religious books.

He was for a long while unwilling to go to the chapel services, *being greatly prejudiced against the Episcopal Church.* His lameness prevented his coming to the Bible-class until some time in November, when he soon became noticeable for the regularity of his attendance, his seriousness, and interest.

After class one morning, I asked him into the library on the plea of giving him a book to read, and then had a long and serious conversation with him, in which he expressed a sincere desire to be a Christian, but said he could not be "earnest enough" about it. The interview was closed with prayer. That prayer, he has often told me since, was the turning-point in his religious life, making Christ a present, living reality, and producing a deep and lasting effect. When we arose from our knees, he thanked me with weeping eyes for what I had done for him by introducing him to the Saviour. From this time our interviews were very frequent; he showed great earnestness and deep humility, together with a most docile, childlike spirit.

From my Diary.—January 18th. G——, as usual, anxious

for me to pray with him ; says prayer does him so much good. He prays for himself frequently in the course of the day, and tries to be very earnest in prayer ; reads his Testament a great deal and tries to keep his mind constantly fixed on spiritual things, yet feels much discouraged, for though he has left off many bad habits, "it does not seem as if he had done so from love to his Saviour,—he makes no progress."

I encouraged him by showing that growth in nature is gradual,—so it is usually in grace. We begin our bodily life as feeble infants, and grow by almost imperceptible degrees to the fullness of strength and stature. The corn is first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. Look within. Is there any true sorrow for sin no matter how feeble,—any love and trust in your Saviour? If so, the means of progress and growth are within your reach : prayer, the reading of God's Word, and meditation on the love of that adorable Redeemer, "who so loved *you*, that He gave his life upon the bitter cross for your salvation."

January 28th.—G—— feels a little better, but something seems wanting ; fears he has not done enough yet. "But," said I, "there is nothing for you to do. Christ has done all. You have broken God's law,—He has kept it for you. You deserve God's wrath,—Christ has suffered in *your stead*, has purchased pardon for *you* with his own most precious blood, and now he comes and offers to welcome you in his family just as you are. You are drowning,—He is the life-boat ; you cannot save yourself,—his spirit will help you to get in. You are in a burning house,—He says, 'throw yourself into my arms ;' do so, it is your only hope of safety. The *gift* of God is eternal life ; you do not have to *earn*, only to *accept* it, and all offers are valueless until the sinner accepts."

He listened very attentively, but was eager for prayer.

After prayer I said, "Now you must try to realize that you have a *right* to pardon and peace." "I a *right?*" said he; "oh, no, I'm too great a sinner yet." "But," said I, "that is the very thing which gives you a right. Suppose you hear that some kind friend has bought a farm for you; you hear of it, but think there may be some mistake; but if the title-deed is put into your hands, and you see that your name is put down as the owner of the property, you can doubt no longer, but thankfully accept the gift. Just so is it with salvation; our Saviour has purchased and now offers it to you, a sinner, that gratitude may make you a new creature." This precious gospel truth seemed to burst upon him as a new revelation; the cloud of anxiety and fear was swept away from his countenance, and in a tone of glad surprise he said, "Is it so? that *I* have nothing to *do* only to accept? Oh, how good that is! but it does not seem possible, and yet it must be true, for you say so."

"Not I, G——, but God himself says so. 'The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin.' 'Christ Jesus came into the world to save *sinners*.' And our Saviour says, 'I came not to call the righteous, but *sinners* to repentance.'" I then repeated that beautiful hymn,—

"Just as I am, without one plea."

"Yes," said he, "I know that hymn, and I have known all you have told me, but I never understood it before, and I can't now. Oh, how glad I am for such good news! It seems almost too good to be true!"

I never in my life saw such overflowing happiness; it was like sight to the blind, liberty to the captive, life to the dead! I again knelt with him to thank God for having thus revealed himself to him in the face of Jesus Christ, and he went on his way rejoicing.

January 30th.—G—— told me yesterday that he felt like a new man. He says to-day that he *believes* the glad

tidings and is happy, yet doubts will steal in; he remembers his wickedness, and it seems as if it could not be that God will freely forgive it all,—it seems too strange and wonderful to be true,—he, so great a sinner, so unworthy! But he sees it in the Bible and in every religious book and knows that it is so, and he reproaches himself for allowing these doubts. Every now and then the glorious truth that his sins are all forgiven, flashes across his mind and makes him so happy he can hardly contain himself; he wishes such happiness would last, but he thinks he could hardly endure it if it did. He said with deep earnestness, "You know that I have mourned for my sins, that though I have these doubts, I *do* believe; now, if I should die to-day, what do you think would become of me?" "G——, I feel sure that you would be forever with the Lord, to enjoy perpetual felicity in those mansions which Jesus has gone to prepare for those who love Him." I wish you could have seen his speaking countenance; it was radiant with joy.

I spoke then of the obligation laid upon us, by such infinite and undeserved love on the part of our divine Saviour, to devote ourselves to his service and to show our gratitude by our lives. St Paul's first question, when Christ revealed himself to him, was, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" "Yes, I have already asked that question." "Paul arose and was baptized." "Yes, I know it to be a duty. I wish to be baptized, but I thought I had something else to do first."

I showed him from various Scripture examples, the Ethiopian eunuch, etc., that baptism was the *next* step to repentance and faith, and the question of baptism was soon decided. His simple and ardent desire is to do everything he can to show his love to his Saviour; he has already, without waiting to have it suggested to him, been speaking to several of his comrades on the subject of religion, and

trying to lead them to Christ, but feels that he is so unworthy, his words are so poor, he cannot instruct others.

After this, he went through a regular course of instruction in the Catechism, which gave me the opportunity of watching his progress constantly and carefully; it was most rapid and satisfactory, a daily growth in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; his humility and self-distrust were remarkable, and led to occasional despondency and fears lest after all he might be making some mistake. He was one day expressing these fears. I said, "You know you are sincere,—that it is your chief desire to love and serve your Saviour,—that for this you would willingly lay down your life."

"Indeed, I would; it would give me joy at this moment to lay down my life if I might thereby know that I was his child!"

On the 27th of February he was baptized; it was a joyous day to him, for he felt that in that sacrament he received the sign and seal of the forgiveness of his sins.

On returning to his regiment he was deeply grieved at the increasing demoralization of his comrades. Until he was again wounded at the battle of the Wilderness his efforts were unceasing to benefit his fellow-soldiers, and were attended with some measure of success. Once more with his regiment near Petersburg, he manifested the most simple faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, as is testified by his comrades, and by the following brief extract from his letters:

"I am once more with my old comrades; but oh, how they have changed since I left them, ten months ago! Would that I could say the change was for the better! but, alas! it is just the reverse. I lost no time in trying to inform myself of the spiritual condition of the company; but oh, how it made my heart ache to see one after another of my old comrades indulging in all the vices that are com-

mon among soldiers! Words would fail to express the déep sorrow and disappointment I felt when I saw one who had formerly been my bosom friend and constant companion indulging in vices that he used to shrink from with feelings of sorrow and disgust. I gently reproved him, more by looks than words, and he appeared for a time greatly embarrassed; he blushed, his eyes sought the ground, and I watched his countenance with the deepest anxiety. But my scrutiny proved anything but satisfactory, for he assumed a stony expression that I never thought him capable of. I almost despaired of him; but remembering your advice, I rallied, and set about the work with my whole heart. I went straight to that friend who is ever ready to hear us when we cry to Him, and to comfort us in our sorrow; and oh, dear teacher, it was so delightful! Never before did I experience such feelings of love for that blessed Saviour whose precious blood has washed away my sins. Never before did I rest more fully on his precious promises, or feel his presence more plainly. He calmed my troubled soul and bid me trust in Him. Oh, the sweet peace that followed! You can imagine what it was like by your own experience, but it is impossible for me to describe it. Oh, how grateful I felt to you, who had pointed me to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world,—you, who so often prayed for me and instructed me day after day! I never could, nor never can find words to express my gratitude to you for what you have done for me; I never forget to pray for you. I was dreadfully disappointed on learning of the change that had taken place among my old comrades, but now I am more determined than ever to persevere. It is with the greatest difficulty that I have prevailed upon some of them to read the books that I brought along. Two of my tent-mates already appear to be a little concerned and have got so far as to pray, and I have great hopes of them. I would earnestly beg an interest in your

prayers not only for myself, but also in behalf of my wayward companions. You expressed a fear that I would find it a difficult matter to kneel down in the tent; but I am happy to inform you I was not embarrassed, as I did not trust in myself, but I trusted in my Saviour, and found his grace sufficient for me.

"Please accept my heartfelt thanks for the useful advice contained in your letter; I do not think you could have said anything that would have been more useful to me, for I was allowing myself to be troubled about the welfare of my comrades instead of trusting in God to bring about a reformation among them. I feel sure, dear teacher, that your prayers have been answered; God has dealt so gently with me, He has kept me out of temptations, He has done everything for me. Our Saviour has been ever near to me, and has taught me what to say and how to act; and I am much more encouraged than I was when I last wrote. Some of my comrades have left off many of their bad habits, and eight of them went with me to the camp of the 70th New York Regiment, and attended divine service last Sabbath-day. We had such a delightful sermon, so very earnest and interesting, all about our Saviour; the best, I believe, I ever heard. I have not started a Bible-class yet; I made but a very feeble effort, but was unsuccessful; I can only pray that God will give me more grace and wisdom and perseverance. My messmates join me in reading and praying, but there are only two of them, and consequently I think we are not making much progress.

"I have persuaded many of my comrades to leave off card-playing and swearing, but they appear to do so more to please me than to reform their ways, and you know that is very discouraging. I often feel that you are praying for me.

"I suppose you will be surprised to hear that I was wounded again, but I hope that I will be fit for duty in

two weeks; we have seen the most desperate fighting that I ever experienced. I wish you would help me thank God for his mercy to me. Since this battle commenced, I have been in places where I thought it impossible for any creature to live, and yet here I am only slightly wounded. When I went into battle, I did not pray that I might be spared; I just prayed that God's will might be done. It was then that I realized what it was to be a Christian. Oh, how thankful I felt that I had once been sent to —— Hospital!

"*Line of Battle, in front of Petersburg.*—I believe I never attempted to write at a more critical moment than the present; one of our batteries is firing right over us, and every discharge shakes the earth; the deadly minié-balls are flying around, and the huge shells are shrieking through the air. Indeed, dear teacher, were it not that I feel that Jesus has prepared me for death, and will take me home to heaven when He sees fit to remove me from earth, I would be unable to write under the present circumstances. I have almost recovered from the wound I received in the Wilderness, but I was struck again by a spent minié-ball, which only inflicted a severe bruise. I constantly put my trust in God, and all is well with me; I can see the hand of God in everything; He sustains me, and I am, at this present, as calm, I suppose, as you ever saw me at the hospital. I need not tell you what comfort I find in prayer; all who are real Christians like you know it."

PROSPECTING.

SEARCHING for the stores of precious metals which have been providentially placed within the reach of man, is called prospecting; but this term is equally applicable to seeking after the still more precious souls that now lie around us, either rockbound or earthbound, because of the lack of Christian intelligence and zeal. Little machinery was needed to collect the gold that had been placed near the surface of the ground as a lure to the hardy pioneers of civilization; but all the appliances which practical skill and science can devise, are now required to draw the precious metal from its deep hiding-places in the earth or in the solid rock. The Church was long contented with the rich yield of its easy surface-work; but the following paper shows that in some districts she is prospecting in each habitable locality, with the firm determination to use every divinely authorized agency for rescuing that which alone has any permanent value. Surely, under the gospel dispensation, the apparatus of the Church is more complete and effective than that of the miner in quartz or earth, and the incentive to save souls should be stronger than the greed for gold; already some zealous women have not only been prospecting, but also working so diligently and efficiently, that very many precious souls have been brought from these hitherto-neglected regions into the treasury of the Lord. W.

DEAR SIR,—In the providence of God I was called to spend part of the last winter in a parish a few miles from my home. At the earnest solicitation of the rector and some of his people, I commenced a "mothers' meeting." They had long desired it, having both heard and seen how greatly God had blessed the like work in the parish to

which I belong. The rector had been earnestly working, but outside of his Sunday-school had for some time labored single-handed; and felt deeply the need of the faithful co-operation of his people.

The day I first went among these people, accompanied by my friend, one of the parishioners, I made six visits. The first woman at whose house we stopped was a communicant of the Church, who promised to come to our meeting. The next three were all of English extraction, and in the habit of coming to service now and then, and all their children belonged to the Sunday-school. They each cheerfully promised to come to the meeting. The next two were Germans, their husbands mechanics. One of these women had, when in the city, attended a Lutheran place of worship, but since removing to the suburbs had gone *nowhere*. She did not know any one, and did not like to go alone. She desired to go, and wanted to send the children to Sunday-school, but no Christian of any name had been to see them, and she was a stranger. She promised to come to the meeting if she might come late, as her husband did not return early from work. This we told her she could do. In the next house we found a mother and six children; everything animate and inanimate was covered with dirt. There was just space to get into the room and sit down; three half-clad children sat upon the floor in a corner, a baby in the mother's arms, and a filthy, repulsive-looking child of eleven years leaned upon a ragged, broken lounge. The atmosphere was so close, it was some moments before I could breathe freely enough to speak. The woman had a pleasant countenance, but was entirely ignorant; looked with wonderment at us for coming to her, but was pleased that any felt an interest in her. When told of the meeting, she simply said, "I cannot leave my home, hardly to go to the store; that one," she continued, pointing to the poor, afflicted girl, "keeps my mind busy

day and night, fearing she may be hurt. My husband has had no work for a long time; the children are poorly off for clothes, or I would be glad to get them to that Sunday-school in the Avenue" (alluding to ours). "But do you never leave home?" "No, never! I have not been anywhere for years." "Have your children been baptized?" "Oh, yes; in the Lutheran." "Where does your husband worship?" With a silly sort of laugh: "Oh, he do not go anywhere; he do not care about Church." I afterward learned from her that he was a hard, blasphemous German, constantly drinking. He forbade her leaving the house or having anything to do with the meeting. I made her several visits. The first time I was there, I left her a tract, and at every other visit she asked me for more; her eldest boy could read quite well. What darkness in this home, and in these hearts! And yet but a patch of ground lies between them and the sacred temple, where the glad tidings of the gospel are preached. She cannot go to be taught; what is to be done with such? Because they are hemmed in by circumstances which keep them from worshiping with us in God's house, must they be left to perish? And to whom shall the thousands of families, of which in a great measure this is a sample, look, to be guided out of the weary way of sin and misery? The rector of this parish made his constant round of visits among the parents of his Sunday-school children. I think he told me he had one hundred families which he was visiting almost weekly. And these people testify to his faithful care over them, and entertain for him a sincere affection. One woman told me she did not know what to do if her pastor missed seeing her every two weeks. He could not possibly give more time than he does. He could not go all over that fast-increasing population. His heart may yearn for them. They may be but "*waiting* for the consolation of Israel." But were the hours of the day doubled, and had he the

strength of many men, it would be beyond the limit of his powers to gather in all these people; and when they were gathered in, do the still greater work of watching over them, guiding, leading, teaching; for to them it must be given "line upon line, precept upon precept." Let the women, like Persis, in the days of St. Paul, gather around their minister, and "labor much in the Lord." Let them go forth with earnest hearts into their homes, praying that the Holy Spirit may breathe his resurrection power, and raise these home-heathen from their moral and spiritual death into the light and life which is ours and theirs through Christ Jesus.

Another day we went to the house of one who had lately become a communicant; first to ask her to come to our meeting, and second to have her point out from her door the Protestant families in the neighborhood. She kept a store, and consequently knew everybody in her immediate vicinity. Near her lived two families who went nowhere to public worship, two others who were Church people, and several Romanists. Here, then, we had the ground pretty well laid out. Next to this woman lived a German family, who had lately moved there, and of whom we knew little; it consisted of a grandmother, a married daughter, the two husbands, and several children.

The grandmother, early trained a Lutheran, would be so glad to see a minister of some Protestant faith, and put the children at Sunday-school. She could speak little English, and therefore felt backward about hunting one; was quite delighted at the idea of the meeting,—promised to come if any one would take her. I told her some one should do so. We then went back to the little store and told our woman there that here lay a missionary work for her to do; she must go for this woman on Friday, and take her with her to the mothers' meeting.

In a solitary-looking house near by lived an infidel, we were told. We knocked at the door; the woman opened

it just wide enough to see us. I saw she was not disposed to invite us in, so I stepped upon the door-sill, saying, "Shall I sit down a little while? I have been walking considerably, and want to see you a few moments." Not very graciously she complied with my request. All around, the place looked so cheerless, so barren; the furniture had apparently been very good, but seemed to be utterly neglected. The woman's face was the hardest I ever saw; deep lines marked it, which made the swarthy skin and uncombed black hair look more uncomely still. Her answers to my kind inquiries were sharp and short. I gathered from her that she had lost two children, and I stored that knowledge away to be used again, after I had sounded the depths of this God-despising family. I asked her to what church her husband went. "None; he hates churches and ministers." "Poor man," I said, "how unhappy that must make you!" (As though nothing else were possible.) She did not answer, and her face told of no emotion within. Thinking it better to change the subject, I said, "This house is so different from the others in the neighborhood; I suppose you own it?" "Yes." When I told her of the meeting, she said if she were willing to go, he would not let her; she did not think much about anything in this world. I said, "Perhaps you would feel happier and more cheerful if you would go more among people." "I don't know about that; I am satisfied." I knew it was not well to say much in such a case in the presence of a third person. I therefore gave her a tract, and rose as though to go. My friend passed out; I held back that I might be alone with her. I took her hand in a kind, affectionate manner, saying, "You will not be angry with me, my dear friend, for coming to your house? I knew you did not go out, as most of the neighbors do, and I thought you had not friends about here, and I would make you feel you had one in myself. Our mothers' meeting, of which I told you, was designed for the purpose

of bringing us all together as mothers." She smiled somewhat kindly and said, "No, I have few friends." "Have you a mother?" "No, they are all dead." "Would your mother, were she here, keep you from the meeting, or be *sorry* or *glad* to see me here?" (This was an indirect way of finding out whether she had a *Christian* mother.) Her reply was decided, kind, and tender. "No, she would have been glad to see you. She was good, and tried to make us so; prayed for us and for father, but he was like me, and never would listen to her." "Where did your mother go to church?" "She was a Methodist." "I suppose you sometimes long for her, and want her advice in your daily cares?" "Ah, indeed I do; but she saw trouble enough, poor mother, without knowing mine." "She taught you to pray when you were a child and to put your trust in the Saviour of the world, told you of his love for you and of the rest she has found, the promised rest of the Christian?" "Oh, yes, madam, I know *that*, I suppose, as well as you do; but knowing it does me no good, I cannot *feel* it. I do sometimes open that old Bible, and wonder how my mother took so much pleasure in it." "And yet, my dear friend, that is the lamp in our hands, and the only one given us to light us to that world where your mother is, and where those children are with whom you parted." She replied, "*You* see it, *I* do not; is that my fault?" "My friend, do you want to see as I do,—do you feel far from God and true happiness, and desire to come to Him?" "No, I do not think I feel anything." "You read in the Bible that Christ came into the world to save sinners?" "Yes, I know all that,—then why am I not saved? that is what my husband says. *If such a one* died for sin, then that is enough; *he* wants no preachers." "The same book says, 'If we *confess* our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive;' it is the will of God that we confess ourselves sinners, and come to Him seeking and asking for his love and mercy,

humbling ourselves before Him. God is tender, loving, pitiful, but He wants to see us realize our entire dependence upon Him." "Well, madam, tell me what your idea is of hell,—do you believe God made me, a helpless creature, to put me into eternal torment for what is born in the flesh He has made? Do you believe He is good who will hurl millions into a bottomless pit?" "You want to know whether God has a big furnace somewhere, unseen, where he intends to put his creatures and literally roast them?" "Yes; do you believe that?" "No, I do not. But, my friend, for a moment let your mind rest upon a drunkard, —you may know one,—one who neglects and abuses his family, lies about like a beast, has few or no friends, has lost every vestige of manhood. What do you think,—is that man happy or miserable?" "Oh, I know he must be wretched!" "Then look at those poor abandoned girls of shame, for whom no door of home opens, from whom all turn away; are they happy?" "No, I think not." "Why are they unhappy? It is because they have turned away from the face of their heavenly Father,—turned from love and joy and peace, and willfully followed evil. God did not want them to stray. Do you think that a God who is so filled with beauty as to have planned and created all the lovely flowers we see around us, could such a Creator look with pleasure upon sin in the form of a loathsome drunkard? No, dear friend, it is the sinner's fault, not God's, and the deeper they go into sin the more wretched they become, and that is present hell. The future hell is a continuation and increase of misery; the unavoidable result of sin. And it is like a dark and *bottomless pit*, into which man *throws himself* when he willfully and voluntarily departs from God and the light of God's revealed will, as given to us in the Bible." "Well," she said, "how do we get to the Creator after we have gone from Him? I cannot see it." I laid my hand on hers, saying, "Our Saviour's

words are, 'All things whatsoever ye ask in prayer believing, ye shall receive.' Prayer shall bring you into God's *presence;* just talking with Him, confessing how dark everything is to you, beseeching Him for the sake of his Son to hear you." Looking at her earnestly, I said, "Do you ever pray?" "I have a few times in my life." I thought her countenance had softened during our conversation. "Will you not kneel down with me, my friend, and let us ask God together to bless us, and give us both more heavenly wisdom? I need it all the time." She moved off from me, saying, "No, no! not now; I would be committing a worse sin to kneel with you, for my heart is cold and dead." "I know it, dear friend, but listen to a few more gracious words from our kind Father: 'A *new* heart will I give you, and a *new spirit* will I put into you, and I will take the stony heart out of your flesh,'" etc. She neither spoke nor moved, standing with her eyes fixed upon the floor. I waited in silence, feeling a strange awe, as though God were there.

At last, without lifting her eyes, she said, in a clear, strong voice, "These are strange words; I cannot pray, you may pray, I will stand and listen." "Oh, no, my friend, I would not like to do that, you must unbend to God; it is resisting God's Spirit. I will wait; promise me you will read some passages I mark in this Bible of your mother's." "I will do that." "And I would like to think that you will pray." "Perhaps I might." "Some time I hope to see your husband. I shall be in this neighborhood for awhile; he would not object to having a conversation with me?" "No, I think not; but he would not let a minister. I never say anything to him, he only talks worse and worse, so I let him alone." The children of these people had the most malicious, hardened faces I have ever seen in childhood; one boy, about eleven years, I found, on inquiry, was the terror of all the boys in the neighborhood,

and the worst boy to be found. I asked him "if he would like to go to Sunday-school?" he replied with a growl, "No, I wouldn't!" and a few more questions I put to him, to which he gave no answer whatever.

"Shall I come again?" I said to the woman when leaving. She smiled, saying, "Oh, yes, if you would like to." I joined my friend, who had called at the house of a woman who she thought would come to the meeting.

The next visit was at the house of one of those thrifty, industrious, cheerful families, we so frequently meet with among the working people, who illustrate what carefulness and perseverance will accomplish, and how entirely unnecessary is the greater part of the destitution and misery of the masses, could they be lifted up, trained, and taught. The husband was a laborer. They had two quite large boys who, of course, helped. They owned the house in which they lived, and the lot adjoining, with a good garden tastefully arranged.

Inside the house the same kind of order and neatness prevailed. The dresser was covered with a white linen cloth, the hearth clean and red, the stove bright and black. Comparing it with the house of a mechanic who lived opposite in an almost comfortless condition, although with half as much again to live upon, I realized how much fearful waste and lack of management there is in the world, and how very much must depend upon the wife. I think the only way to effect any radical change, is for the Church to teach the rising generation of daughters, industry and thrift.

This laborer's wife told me that by making pants and vests, she had clothed herself and children. I asked her who kept the garden in order, as her husband went early to work. She replied, "We do it together; he gets up very early, and works a good while before he calls me; and then in the evening we work again; sometimes when it is moon-

light, until ten o'clock. My husband never goes from home, we are always together." "You take care that no place shall look quite so nicely to him as his own home?" "Yes, indeed; and I don't wonder some men are never home; he says he wouldn't be, if he had such a place to come to as some of his friends have." "And what about the most important of all things, where does he go to church? I see you go, and you told me the boys went to Sunday-school. I am interested in the soul of this good husband." "Indeed, I would be so thankful to see him take of that; I often think of it, and feel how we have neglected our duty. Would you like to talk to him?" "Of course; I should like it above all things." To know the ground upon which I was stepping, I asked her some things relative to him. Whether he objected to her going to church,—if he had been trained religiously when young,—whether he ever prayed,—if he liked the pastor. I gathered that he respected religion, sometimes went to church, was glad to see Christian people at his house, but was too busy to think about his salvation. Whilst I was there he came home, and went into the garden, before coming into the house. I said, "May I go out to him?" she replied, "Yes," and went to the door with me and called him. He looked up, and came toward us; he was an uncommonly handsome man. When told who I was, he shook hands cordially. I commenced right away to speak in admiration of his garden, for I thought it was certainly one of his favorite children. We walked out under the vine; I asked what kind of grapes they were,—what kind of fruit-trees,—how old they were,—wondered how it were possible for him to accomplish so much. And in a very few moments we were quite good friends, and the way opened for a higher range of thought and conversation. First, I told him of our meeting which I had asked his wife to join; hoped it would not interfere with his comforts for her to attend.

"I would be glad for her to go, she works too hard." "How do you like the little church in the Avenue?" "Very well, as much as I know about it; it is a beautiful building, and I like the minister, but somehow I think a man can be just as good without going to church." "Perhaps you are much better than some who go constantly to church, but you may have never been so sorely tempted, or if you have been blessed in some respects in which they have not, would it not be kind, to endeavor to help them? The Church needs good, moral men. You believe God blesses and approves of such a body as the Church, and the Saviour of the world established it?" "Yes, I do; I believe all that." "Then don't you think it better, nay, right, for all men to stand by it, and lend their aid to uphold truth, and try and spread the knowledge and love of God over the world? You know that in the army, numbers combined with discipline subdue the foe." "That is true; I don't say I do right, yet the lives of other men who go to church, both high and low, have kept me from feeling much interest." "Exactly so; but why stand off and let a good thing suffer, when you could, by your example, counteract some of the evil? You might teach some poor, weak, worthless fellow how to make a good home. But above all, God wills us to thus assemble together. Do you pray?" "Well, no, not much." "Who has given you the many blessings you enjoy,—your good, industrious wife,—a mind inclined to good,—a home of comfort?" "Of course, I owe all things to the Creator." "You acknowledge this to *me*, and yet you never do to *Him*, or at least, you are not willing to do anything that would magnify his name. God asks your heart and service; He asks you to give a portion of your life to this work; that is, to do good to those for whom Christ died. In the parish to which I belong, a lady teaches a class of some one hundred and fifty men, and I have a smaller one. If

I were here I would do this work, and ask you to join the class." "And I should do it," he respectfully answered. How many are there like this man, only waiting the offer of teaching? Stalks of overripe grain standing in the fields. Whose hand shall gather them together for the Lord of the harvest? Shall all this grain perish because it is not gathered in? The husbandman does not leave his grain in the field until the cold breath of autumn comes, but gathers it rapidly in due season, because the time for saving it is short; he will forego ease and endure fatigue to have it garnered. Shall we let those who thus welcome us perish, for want of that knowledge which has been intrusted to us to impart to them? We now find in most persons, scarcely any prejudices to overcome. There is work in the vineyard of our Lord for every Christian, but these opportunities are passing away, the time for them cannot continue. "Therefore, whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might, for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave whither thou goest."

Our meeting was commenced on the first Friday in March. Ten were present that night. There being no Sunday-school building attached to the church, we obtained the use of the public school-room, which was small, uncomfortable, and but dimly lighted. The women were almost strangers to me. I gave them, that night, the origin and design of mothers' meetings, with a short account of our own; its progress, how God blessed it to the salvation of many wives, and through them, their husbands and households. I read to them the account of Moses meeting his brother-in-law, during the journey in the wilderness, when Moses asked him to join them; making a point of the text, "Come thou with us, and we will do thee good;" applying it to our desire for *them*, and their ability to help by their experience, just as Hobab did. They were all inter-

ested, and as they bade good night, one woman pressed my hand, saying, "Could you come talk with me at my house?" Another old woman put her hand on my shoulder and said, "I am glad you brought me here to-night." Two others stopped on the porch; one turned to me, saying, "The evening was too short." Another, "I will not forget this night;" the latter is now a communicant of the church. You know that I have little time or strength, yet I now see God's great goodness in allowing me to use all of my own home experience in imparting happiness to my less-favored sisters, and thus, in a very feeble way, to aid in hastening the coming of our dear Lord and Saviour.

"THE EPISTLE OF CHRIST."

St. Paul says that "the Epistle of Christ is written, not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in stone, but in the fleshly tables of the heart;" therefore it is designed to be a living, loving, self-explanatory Epistle, "known and read of all men." The saving truths revealed in the apostolic Epistles need illustrations of Christian life and also *acts* of love to give them full efficacy, especially with the illiterate, for as St. Peter says, "the unlearned and the ignorant" are prone to "wrest them to their own destruction."

The Ten Commandments, although written by the Lord, emitted no moral or spiritual power, and the *only writing* by Him, when He was upon this earth, convicted, but failed to convert those who sought Him; whilst the continuous Epistle in the human heart, written by the ascended Saviour, gives out a power that is the special channel of the Holy Ghost. The following sketch will serve to illustrate

the efficacy of such epistles, as aids in imparting a missionary spirit to the young, and in benefiting the more mature by giving a reality to spiritual things.

The increasing desire manifested throughout the Church to use this divinely accredited human agency more freely than hitherto, is one of the most hopeful signs of the times, for through smiles, little ones can easily recognize the blessing bequeathed to them by their Saviour, and the glad tidings of salvation can thus be communicated to the sons and daughters of toil in their cottages as well as in the house of the Lord. W.

My dear Sir,—During the past month my time has been very fully occupied in making myself acquainted with the new-comers in the mills,—visiting their families and inviting them to join our Bible-class. Besides this, there have been several cases of sickness, demanding special attention. One of our number, whom I held it a privilege and pleasure to visit during his long and painful illness, is now beyond the reach of suffering, and needs the sympathy of Christian friends no longer,—I mean our friend J——, who was confined to his bed so long from the effects of paralysis. I told you of his cheerful submission to the will of God in all things, and how the severe discipline which he has been called upon to undergo seemed but to increase his faith and strengthen his desire to depart and be with his Saviour. A few days before his death our pastor administered the holy communion to him, and soon after I visited him for the last time. I found him unable to speak and failing rapidly, yet conscious of all that passed around him. As I approached his bedside, he held out his hand, with a smile of welcome, and tried in vain to tell me something,—some last word of peace and love, which the trembling lips could not express. After I had spoken a few words to him, he pointed to the Bible which lay beside him

as a sign that I should read to him, as usual. And then we joined together for the last time in prayer to our heavenly Father, praising Him for the sweet promises of the gospel, and for the hope which is ours in Christ Jesus. I found it very hard to leave his bedside, for my heart told me that another day he would not be there to greet us. And even now I can scarcely realize that he has left us; but when I recall the many instances of childlike faith which he has shown, I rejoice that he has entered into his rest. I would not for a great deal give up the hallowed recollections of hours passed in that quiet chamber, where I learned sweet lessons of the blessed truth which his life illustrated, that Christ is all in all to his people. Well may we, in the language of our Church, say, "We bless Thy holy name for all Thy servants departed this life in Thy faith and fear, beseeching Thee to give us grace so to follow their good examples, that with them we may be partakers of Thy heavenly kingdom."

A few weeks since, I received a letter from the pastor of a mission church in the West, acknowledging the receipt of our children's offering towards the erection of the church. He writes, "Tell them we shall appreciate the gift the more as coming from children who have really denied themselves and worked as *they* have for Christ's sake. I am glad to learn that they have joined their prayers with their offerings, and I have no doubt that God will hear and bless them, both to their good and our own. May they continue to do so!" And further, he says, "Our great need is an earnest, pious, *lay element*, to mould and set an example to those who are won to the Church, but have only the general teaching of the pastor to guide them. Oh, if we had this help in each of the missions of the West, how much might be done!—*three times as much*, I think, as a clergyman *can do alone*." I read this letter to the children and to the members of the Bible-class, and urged them to be more earnest

in their prayers and efforts for the cause of Christ. The children were delighted that "a real missionary" should write to them, and are trying harder than ever to fill the missionary-box. They want to add their mite to our contribution in the way of clothing, etc., for the mission house, and so the boys have agreed to raise the money to purchase material for the little girls to sew. What a wise and blessed thing it has proved to enlist the sympathies and co-operation of the children in the great missionary work of the Church! If all of us who bear the mark of Christ upon our forehead, men, women, and children, would do our part in the work which our Lord has committed to his Church, what might we not hope for? How many of us who read in THE SPIRIT OF MISSIONS of "the fields white unto the harvest," and who pray daily "Thy kingdom come," are making any efforts to hasten its coming by *pointing souls to Christ*, or *helping others to do so?* I was reading an article to-day, headed "Our Roman Catholic Brethren," in which the writer compared their zeal and missionary enterprise with our slowness and indifference. "When we consider what has been effected in that church by system and by lay co-operation, making every man, woman, and child feel that they had their part to do in furthering the cause, why are we Protestants so slow in adopting like measures? Surely, if success has crowned their labors, can we doubt that God's blessing would rest upon us if we employed the same zeal and devotion in spreading the gospel of Christ and building up his Church upon earth?"

Yesterday, I gave the little girls their work for the missionary-box, and one of them said, on receiving her piece, "Isn't it nice!" Yes, I answered, it is very nice, and I shall hope to have it very neatly sewed. "Oh, I didn't mean *that*," said she; "I meant, isn't it nice that we *can all do something* for the missionaries!" Another child brought her piece of work to me, neatly folded up and ready for the box.

On opening it to examine the sewing, I found a small package wrapped up inside. "*That*," said my little friend, "is a piece of soap, which I bought with some money which a gentleman gave me to buy candy, but I thought I would rather give it to one of the missionaries. Wouldn't you like to be there when he opens my work and this falls out? I guess that he will wonder who put it there!" Yes, indeed; he may not know that the little hands which hid that package so deftly among the folds of the cloth, "that it might be a surprise to him," were those of one of God's humblest,—one who is just beginning to learn the meaning of those sweet words of Jesus, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

I find it very hard to persuade some of the members of the Bible-class to invite others to attend. Many who come regularly themselves, rarely bring a companion with them. The excuses given are various: "It would do no good." "I thought about it, but didn't exactly like to." "I felt that you were the best one to invite them," etc. All of which indicates selfishness and a hesitancy to speak of Him whom we have confessed. But there are others who seldom come alone, and one of these is S——. "I never feel quite right," said he, "to go to the chapel without asking some one to come with me, and I almost always find them willing; there are not many who will say 'no' to you when you have taken the trouble to invite them." One evening he came quite late to the class, which was something unusual for him to do; but I noticed that he brought a friend with him, and from the expression of his face, I judged that there had been some good reason for absence. On our way home he said to me, "I suppose that you thought I was not coming to-night, but I was determined to do all I could to bring A——. He told me at first that he would not come, but I told him that I knew he would like it; then he made some excuse about his old clothes, and I told him they were

as good as mine, and I'd sooner wear my old coat than stay away. At last he said that he could not get through his work in time. Well, said I, if that is all the trouble, we'll get there yet. So I went back to the house with him, and *together* we soon finished all that was to be done. Oh," added he, "I think that a great many stay away just because they feel a little *strange* and shy, and I know it was the case with myself for a long time." S——'s friend has attended quite regularly since then, and if, by God's grace, the Bible-class shall be made the means of awakening in his heart an interest in heavenly things, will it not be a cause of thankfulness to S—— that he persevered in saying, "Come and let us go into the house of the Lord"?

Since writing this, I have had the comfort of witnessing S——'s public confession of faith in Christ. And now that he is numbered among the believers, I recall my conversations with him on the subject of personal religion. At first nothing that I could say seemed to produce any effect, for all that I could elicit from him in answer to the most serious questions, would be a smile, and "You are right," or "That's so." He would never offer the least objection to what I might say in regard to the necessity of a change of heart, the all-sufficient grace of God in Christ Jesus, or the danger of putting off the day of our salvation. But often, when pleading earnestly with him on these subjects, I have seen him watching me with an expression of wonder and interest, such as a child wears when listening to some marvelous story,—then the smile and nod of assent, and this was all that I could draw from him. Do you wonder that I sometimes felt it was in vain to try to interest him in the great question of his salvation? I ought to say, rather, do you wonder that I felt discouraged in my feeble efforts to do him good when I forgot for the moment that the work is not our own, but "God giveth the increase"?

However, I learned afterwards that, though little was

said, yet the Word of God was not without effect in his case, for I found from the testimony of others, as well as my own observation, that a great change was being wrought in him, and what I had attributed in him to indifference and want of any deep feeling, was the result of natural shyness, and a hesitancy to speak of what was most in his thoughts and the subject of his earnest prayers. I have written thus fully about S—— because the question is often asked me, "Do you never meet with cases where you seem to make no impression? and do you never feel disheartened?" If one who is conscious that she has a work to do for Christ, yet too easily tempted to turn aside and say it is of no use, should chance to read this letter, let me bid her take courage; for the same God who bade us sow beside all waters, has likewise promised the increase.

I mentioned in my last letter the three children of Mrs. E——, whose husband keeps a drinking-saloon. A few days since I called upon her to renew my invitation to the Bible-class. I entered the house cautiously, as the voices of those in the bar-room had already reached my ears, and I did not wish to be seen by them. But with all my caution, her husband and two or three of his most regular customers, who were bending over the billiard-table, noticed me as I passed by their room. After some conversation with Mrs. E—— about the children, I said, "Shall we see you to-morrow at the chapel?" "No, indeed," said she; "Sunday is our busiest day, and I don't like to leave the house." "How I wish that we could induce your husband to attend the evening service!" I replied; "we shall have such an interesting lecture, and there will be good music, too." "It will take more than that to bring him," she answered; "but I'll tell him what you say." I left her with very little, if any hope, that this invitation would be heeded; but last evening, when about to enter the chapel, one of the young men who were standing outside said to me, "You

have some attendants to-night who, I think, are making their first visit to a church since they came to this country." On inquiry I found it to be E—— and some of his friends. I stopped to speak to them and bade them welcome, and after service urged them to come again. "Well," said E——, "I never supposed that I should pass a Sunday evening this way; but my wife told me about your visit and what you said, and then the children would not be satisfied till I promised to go and to take them with me. It is the first time," added he, "that I have been to church for eight years and more; and the children had to find all the places in the Prayer-Book for me."

One of the women who has attended the classes regularly for some time past said to me, yesterday, "I was so glad to hear you explain those words in the Creed, 'The Holy Catholic Church.' I never could make up my mind to say them, and I did not like to think that my children used them in the Sunday-school. It seems to me that you have *explained away* almost everything which I have objected to in the Episcopal Church. I told my husband," continued she, "that I thought the children in the Sunday-schools often know more about the Prayer-Book than their fathers and mothers do, because so many of us have not been brought up in the Church, and it seems *simple* to ask questions about such things." How I wish that more time were devoted in the Church to the direct teaching and explaining of the Catechism to the people! It is not that poor woman only who needs to be instructed in the principles of the faith, for I have often been amazed at the answers given by persons of intelligence and some education, to questions which involved but a most superficial knowledge of the history and doctrines of the Church. And for those among us who are best taught in these things,—who, "meditate upon them"—an occasional setting forth of the doctrines, sacraments, and government of the Church, showing that they

are divinely appointed, cannot fail to stir up our hearts to new love and gratitude that we are members of the apostolic Church.

We forget, too, that there are so many strangers in the Church, who may be drawn there by curiosity or by admiration of her services, and who only need instruction to remove early prejudices and a certain distrust which exists in so many minds, lest the very services which they have learned to love, savor of Romanism. I long to see our men and women able to give an intelligent answer to the question, "Why are you a member of the Episcopal Church?" Were they more firmly rooted in the faith, they would not be so tossed about with the many strange doctrines of the day, nor their minds distressed by questions and doubts which assail the weak believer. We have just completed our usual course of study on the Catechism and Prayer-Book, preparatory to confirmation, and I think we can all say, with one of our number who has been through this course with us three times, "I find my Prayer-Book is like my Bible in this respect,—the more I study it, the more I prize it, and the more I find to learn in it."

Last week the Bishop visited us and confirmed seven of our Bible-class, with others of the congregation. The weeks preceding confirmation must always be a season of great anxiety to those who are watching and praying for the growth of grace in the hearts of their scholars. The fear of leaving something unsaid which might have settled the faith of some doubting one, or of influencing another to take this solemn step without due preparation, would prove a weight too heavy for us to bear, had we not the one unfailing resort for strength and wisdom. And when such seasons are past, and we consider the love of God in leading this or that wandering soul to repentance, I always wonder at my unbelief, for among those who have confessed Christ, there were some whose hearts had once seemed most hardened to

any appeal, and to whom, then, the love of our Saviour meant nothing. Last evening we had a communicants' meeting as usual, and as I looked on those who met with us for the first time in preparation for that holy sacrament, I could only say to myself, "It is the Lord; He giveth the increase." Among those present was Mrs. E——, who listened to all I said with an anxious expression on her face which betokened deep feeling. On our way home she walked some time in silence, then said, "I can't make it right that I should come to the Lord's Supper." "And why so?" I asked. "Oh, it is too much for one who has led such a careless life as I have; I don't think that you realize how bad I have been." I told her that He who turned not away when she came as a penitent sinner to make her public confession of faith in Him as her God and Saviour, would not fail to bid her welcome now. "That's what I mean," she replied. "I believe that all my sins are forgiven; but that I should come to the communion *like any one else, seems asking too much.* Think of it!" she continued; "only a little more than a year ago, I used to go with M—— to ——— Church, just to make fun of the services; and now you say come, as to a friend! Oh, it is too much to ask!" Again, she said, "It seems to me that the thought of my past sins troubles me more, a great deal, since I became a Christian, than when I first felt myself to be a sinner. Then they made me feel afraid; but now the thought that I kept on sinning *while God was so kind to me*, makes me feel worse than anything else." Yes, this was the woman who had once told me that she did not mean to bother her head about such things just then; she had enough to attend to.

Many of the scholars have spoken of the help which that excellent little book, "The Earnest Communicant," has proved to them in self-examination and prayer. As one of the men said, "It is strange, but whoever wrote that book

seemed to know just the questions which I wanted to ask, but did not *know how to put them.*"

One of the members of our missionary association handed me his quarterly subscription the other day, apologizing for being a week behind time in paying it. I said to him, "N——, I think that you are hardly able to give this, for you have been out of work several weeks, and under such circumstances it is not required of you." "I know that you told us so," was his reply; "but I don't believe in that way of giving,—just when it is *easy* to do so. It seems too much like saying, 'Self first, and the church afterwards.' No," added he, more earnestly, "that is not what I find in the Bible, nor what you taught in the class last Sunday about denying ourselves for others."

I find, on reading over my letter to you, that I have unconsciously repeated myself, saying here and there, "God giveth the increase." But can we say this too often to ourselves or to others who, like us, are sometimes faint-hearted? No; I think that if we realized more fully these blessed words, we would be more ready "to sow beside all waters," nothing doubting.

HOW TO BEGIN.

THE following extracts from a letter on Church work and from the monthly report of a visitor will aid timid ones in beginning. Did it ever occur to you that our Lord incited those only who were willing to give personal service, to pray that more laborers might be sent into the harvest?

W.

"MY DEAR SIR,—You ask for a chapter of my limited experience to aid you in arousing shrinking, self-distrustful women to labor in the Master's vineyard. I say,—

"Oh, if our Christian women would rise up and go forth in the Master's strength to the great harvest of souls, what wonders God would do in our midst! It seems to me that the call comes now for her with the *one* talent, which she has hid away so carefully, as well as for those of the stronger faith and richer mind, to whom are intrusted the five and the ten talents to use in their Lord's service. How often I hear the remark made when speaking of some one active in Church service, 'How happy she must be, engaged in such a work!' 'It must be such a pleasant thought, that you are doing so much good;' and, again, 'I envy you the power of leading so many in the right way'! These are doubtless the expressions of an honest desire to do something in the cause of Christ,—a confession on the part of many, of the emptiness and unsatisfactory nature of much that constitutes the everyday life of single women. Especially is this the case with those who, while yet young, have taken their stand among the followers of Christ, and would gladly enter on some work of love, if some one wiser, older than themselves, would lead them by the hand a little way,—I say, *lead* them, walk beside them,—for simply to point out the path to unused feet will have but little effect, save to bewilder and dishearten. I speak strongly on this point because my first attempts at Church work are still fresh in my memory, and well I recall the feeling of doubt and hesitancy with which I stood before that row of houses in B—— Street, wishing for some one to whom I could say, 'Would you?' Let me say to beginners, that the sewing-school is a place where any one can lend a helping-hand, and many who would shrink from teaching a Bible-class, or working among the men and women in our mills or in the outskirts of the town, would yet feel no hesitation about laboring among the children. And if the work be faithfully performed, if the sewing-school be regarded only as the *door* through which we may find our way into the hearts and

homes of these little ones, I believe that it will prove most efficient in increasing our numbers at Sunday-school, in adding to the Bible-class, and restoring to the fold of the Good Shepherd many of his wandering sheep.

"And when I say if the work be faithfully performed, I refer of course to the effort which each teacher should make to become well acquainted with the personal history of those under her charge. The lady who teaches her little children to sew, and thus puts them in the way of earning an honest livelihood, is sure of a ready welcome from their poor mother. She has not only afforded pleasure to her children, giving them something in the week to look forward to, but has eased *her* mind for a little while, at least. She knows that her children are out of danger, well cared for, well taught, and by one on whom she has no claim, save that of which she has heard so little, 'the love of Christ which constraineth us.' And when the children come home and tell the tired woman of all they have enjoyed, the sweet hymns they sang, the kind words spoken by the strange lady, her questions about their mother, how she wrote down the number of their house and *promised to come and see them*,—does not that mother already count you as a *friend?* Then, if you go with cheerfulness and sympathy, bringing light into that poor dwelling, you may speak to them of Jesus and the power of his love, and *they will believe you.* No, it is not by alms-giving alone, that the lay members of the apostolic Church may enlarge the borders of Zion. Our work is not to *buy*, but to *win* souls to Christ; and this calls not only for the fervid eloquence of the preacher, but the daily ministrations of love and sympathy, the word in due season, the prayer with the afflicted or tempted, all of which lie within the power of any earnest, Christian woman.

"When our beloved Church, through the zeal and faithfulness of her clergy and laity, shall become truly a mother

to her children, then shall we see the many Christian works now started by individuals, all emanating from that great centre. How many benevolent enterprises started by those whose hearts were honest in the sacred cause, and have gone forth single-handed, have failed from lack of means, or management, or Church authority! In all the great educational movements of the day, as well as in our missionary efforts, the Church should take the lead, and from the parish school to the college, I would recognize the discipline and teaching of our Mother Church. Were this *system*, this doing of all things in order, more fully carried out in all branches of Church work (I speak now of woman's work), there would be a far more equal division of labor. Many who now lack energy or ability to *seek* out work for themselves, would faithfully and willingly perform the task allotted them; they are ready to do their *share* in any good work, though they would shrink from the responsibility of undertaking that work on their own account. At present, you too often find that the 'Church work' in a parish, in the Sunday-school, visiting among the poor, attending to the wants of the sick, reading to them, praying with them, etc., devolves upon two or three, and this is not my idea of *Church* work. I do not think that the province of one person should interfere with that of another, and especially in a case where religious instruction and influence are needed. A man cannot speak of these things to everybody, and the friend who sought him out, and first showed interest in the welfare of his soul, is generally the one best qualified to lead him on. But the field is wide enough for each and all to find work to do; and if it be done *in order*, as several parts of a whole, we shall see the effect, not only in the increased numbers of those who throng our Sunday-schools asking to be pointed the way Zionward, to be taught of the doctrines of Christ, but also in the strengthening bond of fellowship which unites those

who are laboring for their common Lord. Christian women must have some work in which each can perform her part,—inciting and 'provoking one another to good works.' How earnestly we toiled, when our country called for the energies of her faithful children, in preparing clothing for our soldiers, and ministering to the sick and dying in our hospitals! And so to-day, if the daughters of our Church would use the powers which God has given them, if they would be the 'right hand' to our clergy in the carrying out and furthering of their plans, we should soon see a new spirit in our midst. Yes, from the youngest of us, who has just renewed her baptismal vows, to those who can bring to the work the experience of a long life and much knowledge, there is need of all, and of their several abilities."

EXTRACT FROM A VISITOR'S MONTHLY REPORT.

You asked us, at the last committee meeting, to give some sketch of our mode of visiting. Thus, Mrs. A—— had never been used to the Church; liked it, but did not feel at home there, because she could not find her places, so with her I commenced a little series of lessons on the Prayer-Book. At each visit she brought the book out with great interest to show me what progress she had made, until at last she told me with great joy that now she had no trouble, and could find everything easily. Mrs. B——, who is a very intelligent woman, often asks me questions about the Church, the Prayer-Book, and the Bible. She said there were many things she wanted to ask which she could not think of when I came. I suggested that she should write them down as they came into her mind, so

that gives interest to every visit. Yesterday she brought out her Bible with the passages marked that she could not understand, and we went over them together. I have adopted this plan in several cases, and find that it works well. It makes the women think more, and look forward with more interest to the next visit, and it gives the visitor a definite object and a special subject for conversation. Of course it is always understood that if they ask me anything which I cannot answer immediately, I may wait until my next visit, and bring an answer then. If I happen to be visiting on any day which the Church especially observes, I speak of it, tell why we keep it, and try to show what a help the Church seasons are to us in our Christian life, pointing out how everything in the Church centres in, or points to, Christ. Sometimes I carry with me a book on the Christian life, and if a quiet opportunity offers, suggest reading a chapter. Yesterday, for instance, I read the headings of several chapters to a woman, asking her to choose which she would rather hear. The reading of the chapter she selected led her to tell me of her own greatest temptation and chief hinderance to her growth in grace, so we prayed for that specially, and when we rose from our knees she told me she was sure now she could overcome it. I find lessons on the Prayer-Book one of the most important points, specially in visiting those who have not been brought up in the Church, and are so ignorant about it that it is almost a wonder that they can take any interest at all in the services.

DIOCESE OF PENNSYLVANIA,
EPISCOPAL ROOMS, 708 WALNUT STREET,
Philadelphia, May 19, 1869.

MY DEAR MR. WELSH:

The report on the best mode of working a parish, prepared and read by the Rev. John W. Claxton, on the third day of our last Diocesan Convention, is a paper of such singular merit and value, that I am quite desirous that it should have more publicity and a wider circulation than can be given to it through the pages of the Convention Journal.

But as the report is necessarily theoretical, and rather suggests plans for the future than gives results of work already accomplished, I take the liberty of asking you, to whom I have committed the oversight of the lay work connected with the Protestant Episcopal Hospital, to furnish me such facts and statistics in connection with your work as will throw light upon the report by showing the practicability of carrying out its suggestions.

The subject is one of vital interest to all our parishes. The engrafting of one or more features of the plans suggested by the report upon our several parishes would give new life and growth to each. We cannot expect parochial success unless we have parochial work. The true secret of parochial work is to have apportioned to each one special work, and then to see that all come up to the measure of their duty in the work. The suggestions of the report being mostly based on certain points brought to the notice of the Diocese by my primary charge, "On the Undeveloped Powers of the Church," delivered before the Convention in 1865, I naturally feel an earnest solicitude to see these hints in practical operation. Wherever they have been tested, they have produced good results. I want to have these views more extensively adopted, and more thoroughly acted upon. While the whole power of the Church resides in its in-

dwelling Holy Ghost, yet that Blessed and Divine Spirit works mainly through human instrumentalities, and the more wisely we adjust, increase, and use these, in the various forms here indicated, the more effective will be the Church in its ability to reach the masses, and leaven them with the gospel of Jesus Christ. I hope that you may find time to give some of the results of your own labors, and those of some of your indefatigable co-workers in such a form as may be most useful in guiding the working energies of both the clergy and the laity.

I remain, very truly, yours,

WM. BACON STEVENS.

WM. WELSH, ESQ.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

AS TO

PAROCHIAL AGGRESSIVE WORK.

PREPARED AT THE REQUEST OF BISHOP STEVENS.

BEFORE considering the modes of operation and the results of aggressive work in connection with the Hospital Chapel Mission and other kindred fields, as suggested by Bishop Stevens, it may be well briefly to refer to the simple gospel principles on which that work is based. To give permanency to the result of their labors, the most thorough Church organization is highly prized by those engaged in this aggressive work, all of whom act under the authority and supervision of their respective ministers. They invariably strive to bring all whom they seek to benefit, into union with the Church, and to interest them in her public services, either at once, or as soon as may be after they have become connected with a mothers' meeting, a Bible-class, or some other preliminary organization in which they are socialized and instructed.

Although the minister alone can officially incorporate into the visible Church, and his active personal agency is needful to strengthen the bond of union with it, yet in seeking out the indifferent and sinful, and drawing them to Christ, and making them feel at home in his Church, the voluntary, persuasive influence of a refined woman is in

most cases more potent for good than any that a man can exert or even than the official authority of the minister. This is obvious and natural, for the same manifestation of woman's persuasive power is equally apparent in the family relation where much more is accomplished for morals and religion by the persuasive influence of the mother, although God intrusts the father with supreme authority. This is especially apparent in reclaiming and imparting hopefulness and new moral power to a son or daughter who has strayed from the path of virtue, or who left the parental roof because it was not a congenial home.

The Church, in her Sunday and parochial schools, is now largely using woman's power in teaching and training the young; and in a few parishes where the Church is awakening to the painful consciousness that she has not provided a congenial home for her children as they approach maturity, and for adults whose lot is labor, woman's persuasive power is beginning to be freely used in reclaiming wanderers and welcoming them to their Father's house. In such cases, it is both humiliating and encouraging to find that the chief part of our youth and of working people become estranged from the Church, not so much from disrelish for religion, as from the too obvious fact that their Father's house has not been made a congenial home for them, a home where cordial fellowship abounds and where religious instruction is adapted to the tastes and requirements of all sorts and conditions of men.

This use of woman's voluntary ministrations is merely a return to the usage of the Church in apostolic times; for St. Peter said that women, both bond and free, witnessed for Jesus by word and deed, after the Pentecostal fulfillment of Joel's prophecy. Woman so readily and gracefully condescends to men of low estate, that, with her help, it is easy, in ministering to the poor, to check the too free use of money, which is often viewed as a compensation for the lack of

personal service, and frequently begets a fawning, cringing disposition that leads to self-deception and hypocrisy. Words and acts of loving kindness are substituted for this habit, and with women's tact and hopeful help, religion becomes so attractive that the indifferent and desponding are incited to aspirations for a better life. In parishes that are conducted on these simple gospel principles, the minister is not overworked, and his hands are upheld, therefore he is disinclined to leave such a parish. It is also found that in a parish thus worked, spiritual life and aggressive operations are never hindered by political or partisan contentions, or by the strong opposition and distrust that are sometimes manifested by other religious bodies. Indeed, such congregations are often energized and banded together so closely by opposition that their efficiency is increased.

A thoroughly active and well-organized gospel Church has nothing to fear, even if all *ultra*-Protestant bodies should combine against her, for the Church of Rome, with all her obvious errors, suffers but little from the violent opposition to which she is constantly subjected. It will be well for all religious bodies closely to scrutinize her educational successes, her tender care for the sick, and all the other modes by which she generates and uses spiritual power. Surely, no well-organized Church, with a pure scriptural faith, claiming to have divine authority, can in this Protestant nation be content any longer to yield ground to a foreign Church with a foreign ministry. Rome will, no doubt, be quite contented meekly to bear all the public denunciation which can be heaped upon her, if Protestants are willing to ignore Church schools, Christian sisterhoods, and other agencies that illustrate the practical power of Christianity.

Protestant sisterhoods in Europe, and every attempted organization of the services of Christian women in this country for educational or charitable purposes, have met

with such suspicion and distrust that these invaluable auxiliaries of the Christian Church have sometimes been forced to customs and sympathies which were at first very uncongenial. Fortunately for Protestantism this unreasonable prejudice is fast passing away; and the future of our well-organized Church is becoming more hopeful, as is evidenced by the following extract from the Pastoral Letter of the House of Bishops:

"Much thought has been given by your Bishops, as well as by members of the other House in this Convention, to the necessity of enlarged associated effort in works of mercy and education. Much that needs to be done can be accomplished in no other way; and we are sure that men and women can be found, 'the love of Christ constraining them,' who will not withhold themselves from lives of labor and self-denial, in ministering to the sick and needy, in caring for the aged, and in training the young. Though nothing more than a decent maintenance can be expected by such devoted servants of Christ, it must be remembered that nothing more than this is realized by thousands who sacrifice not only their bodies but their souls, in hope of this world's gain. Let it be understood that the sort of associations we thus commend, must be wholly free from ensnaring vows, or enforced confession, and in all things subject to canonical and diocesan authority.

"The social habits of our country afford to women, even in the humbler walks of life, a degree of exemption from toil and industrial activity, unknown in other countries, except among the opulent. Hence thousands of 'women professing godliness' dwell among us, like those rebuked in Holy Scriptures, as 'women who live at ease and as careless daughters.' It is not our desire merely to suggest the need of a reform of idleness and self-indulgence, but rather to awaken convictions that are dormant, and to enlist affections and energies that are undeveloped. It is the

peculiar work of woman, in Christian society, to furnish, in manifold domestic and social offices, and in works of mercy, spiritual as well as physical, a pattern 'of whatsoever things are pure and lovely and of good report.'"

In this memorable Pastoral Letter, our spiritual Fathers have rolled off the reproach that the Church had cast upon woman during the Dark Ages, thus opening up a bright and hopeful future. With woman's help, the ministry can make the Church the true bride of Christ by using Christian practices to illustrate and enforce Christian principles, and thus remove a strong and natural prejudice against Christianity, making it comparatively easy to compel all men to come to the gospel feast.

The concurrence in the foregoing principles is now so general, that in this respect there is greater practical unity in the Episcopal Church in this country than at any former period in her history. Everywhere the dormant and discursive spiritual life of her members, too long restrained, or allowed too much play, is beginning to be exercised in more aggressive and more orderly parochial missionary work; hence the question comes from all quarters, How shall I begin to reduce these principles to practice? The writer, at the request of the Bishop, will, in the brief period of leisure at his disposal, endeavor to show how such work was commenced and is now successfully conducted in half a dozen fields that are under his observation. For the sake of clearness, these experiences will be stated under four of the general heads indicated by the Committee on the best means of working a parish, and approved by the Convention.

First. Generating and exercising a missionary spirit in the parish.

Second. Religious and secular instruction for all sorts and conditions of men.

Third. Intelligence and reverence in public worship.

Fourth. Free services, and their necessary accompaniments of Christian fellowship and pastoral supervision.

First. A missionary spirit, when developed and increased by prayerful, self-denying, personal efforts for the salvation of others, is the surest evidence of the indwelling Spirit, and the source of all the aggressive parochial work under consideration. The obvious Christian duty of personal ministrations is first enunciated distinctly, authoritatively, and persuasively from the pulpit, not only as a requirement of God and the most satisfactory evidence of possessing the Spirit of Christ, but also as a very important means of grace. Then the minister, or an intelligent and trained worker whom he has selected, diligently and perseveringly seeks out and persuades some suitable person to begin a small specific work. Rarely, if ever, do suitable women proffer their services because of a public call; indeed, their diffidence is often so great that some of the ministering women who are doing most efficent service, had to be drawn into the work insensibly to themselves. Refined, self-distrustful, or even morbidly sensitive women are among the most efficient workers; and surely such are not likely to offer their services, or to begin with general, or large operations.

Few women who possess anything of the Spirit of Christ will refuse to accompany a pastor, or experienced worker of his selection, to visit periodically, and talk, or read, or sing to some less favored, or afflicted child or sister. If judiciously dealt with, such a visitor soon takes pleasure in the work, for she sees that her visits are appreciated. She is then induced to extend the field of her operations, or to aid in gathering children into Sunday- and parochial-schools, to visit or teach them when there, to draw men into Bible-classes, or women into mothers' meetings, etc. These visitors soon find that they can use much of their reading, and all of their experience, both sad and joyful, for the benefit of those who are less prosperous, or to whom

God has intrusted fewer talents. Sympathy in domestic cares and trials soon flows out spontaneously, suggestions as to family duties are kindly and judiciously given, and even instruction in handicraft often makes the visit most welcome, and all this prepares the way for the great aim, instruction in spiritual things. What was at first an act of self-denial, undertaken from a stern sense of duty, or after much wrestling in prayer, or under the constraining influence of a Saviour's love, often becomes the highest joy of life, repeating some of St. Paul's blessed experiences.

Spiritually-minded Christians who imitate their Master by going about doing good, soon feel the necessity of private prayer before and after each visit, that they may have spiritual guidance in, and a blessing upon, their work; but more than ordinary humility and grace are needed by most visitors, before they are willing to pray with those whom they are striving to benefit. This natural shrinking from an important scriptural duty is often heightened by the extravagant and offensive use of prayer by some overzealous Christians, or by the too common belief among us that lay people are to worship and to give freely of their money, and then to throw upon the minister all the responsibility of praying with others. Either of these extremes is well-nigh fatal to enduring parochial missionary work; but the last is by far the worst, for there are times and seasons when the very tones of a voice engaged in prayer seem to be God's special channel of grace. Simple, earnest prayer at such times and seasons, for special needs, not only teaches the uneducated, the frail, and the desponding how to pray, but opens up to such this channel of grace, thereby comforting, assuring, and strengthening their faith. Where the importance of this duty is fully appreciated, timid but spiritually-minded visitors usually begin by first praying with the young or very illiterate, with whom they feel more free from embarrassment. Some of those who were once

the most timid and shrinking, now pray whenever they believe that those whom they visit can be aided or benefited thereby. Where prayer with others is neglected, either from principle or prejudice, or from lack of spirituality, visits seem to be unproductive of lasting benefit, mothers' meetings and Bible-classes languish, pecuniary stimulants are often substituted, and the whole system of lay work is condemned and discarded. Experience has revealed the fact that prayer with an individual has no stronger tendency to generate spiritual pride than praying in the closet, and that it may also be a high means of grace to the teacher as well as to the taught. In the parishes under consideration, this prayerful and intelligent personal effort for the salvation and spiritual edification of others is promoted in every possible way, and as one of the aids to it indicated in the gospel, members of the Sunday-school, of Bible-classes, and of mothers' meetings are encouraged to unite two and two for mutual prayer and support.

The mode of generating a missionary spirit is here dwelt upon at some length, because without it the whole parish work is apt to become secularized, whilst with its aid all the appliances, even sewing-schools and industrial instruction for adults, are made helpful to spiritual life. Some, who have little natural aptitude for giving religious instruction to the indifferent and the sinful, are quite willing to show kindness to, and to nurse the sick and afflicted. As hospitals are too expensive to be managed by a single parochial organization, a dispensary can be substituted at very little cost and with still higher spiritual benefit, as the patients can be followed to their homes. It is increasingly evident, that a parochial mission-house is needed, in which all the work of the parish may centre, and thus make it apparent that it flows out from the Church. In many parishes much sick diet is furnished, and other acts of kindness are manifested, in a way that rather tends to increase interest

in the individual giver, than to commend Christ's love or to aid in incorporating the receivers of these benefits into the Church.

Where parishes stir up and direct this missionary spirit, money flows steadily and freely into every missionary channel, and ardent and intelligent workers will be ready to search for and to occupy every ripe field.

Second. *Religious and secular instruction for all sorts and conditions of men.* The chief excellence in the recent successful efforts to impart spiritual benefits to classes hitherto imperfectly reached, lies in the amount of religious instruction given in neglected homes, in Bible-classes, and in mothers' meetings.

The parish missionary workers rely much on the religious instruction given in, and the watchful care over, the family. Their visits to these houses are not made merely to invite the inmates to church or to some preparatory class, but to commend Christ's love intelligently and perseveringly, following up each person over whom any influence can be acquired, either directly or through the help of friends. The readiness of heart and mind to receive religious instruction and to respond to its appeals is most encouraging, but much gentleness and tact are required, for very rarely is it discreet to make an appeal in the presence of a third person. There is no assignable limit either to the extent or influence of this character of work, for new acquaintances are constantly formed, and some of those who were once either indifferent or opposed to religion become efficient helpers. In one of the parishes, six hundred families are thus reached, and during the last year more than seven thousand visits were paid to their homes by a little band of ministering women, whose gratuitous, loving labors have been signally blessed. The changes wrought in some of these households are marvelous; thrift and neatness have taken the place of waste and untidiness; family prayer has been

introduced and the moral and spiritual interests of the children watched over. Previous to these visits, the beneficial influence of instruction at the Sunday-school was more than nullified, whilst now, the home and the Church are firm allies in opposing evil and overcoming it with good. On this head the House of Bishops thus spoke:

"The Christian family is more and more regarded among us as the Divine Institution on which the Church itself mainly relies for its prosperity, and to which nothing less than the succors and heavenly consolations of the Church of Christ can impart the means of perpetuity and perfection. Everything must languish in the Church until all our families are made truly Christian, and until there is, as of old, a church in every house."

The experiment of Bible-classes for adults and youths taught by ladies has far exceeded the expectations of the most sanguine teachers. That thirty, forty, sixty, or as in one instance, over one hundred women, should be convened in one class is not so remarkable as that thirty, forty, sixty, one hundred, one hundred and twenty-five and even one hundred and seventy-six working men should be banded together in separate classes, each taught by a lady. Lads, who are just approaching manhood, and who, owing to their connection with fire-companies and other similar associations, were thought to be as untamable as hyenas, have, through the agency of Bible-classes, been kept in the Church, or reclaimed after they had wandered far from holy influences.

There is often less difficulty in drawing careless and ungodly men to a Bible-class, where they meet their companions and are cordially welcomed by the teacher, than to the services of the Church. To such God's word, when clearly expounded and illustrated, seems like a new revelation. This interest is readily increased by information on history, geography, and social life. Few trained and in-

telligent hearers give as earnest heed to the utterances of an eloquent preacher, as these sons of toil do to the plain, earnest teaching by the ladies who conduct these classes. It is now plainly shown that the Church has no warrant for withholding Bible instruction from adults who are not yet prepared to be worshipers, as the study of God's word in a well-organized Bible-class is more attractive and effective than sermons of more than ordinary eloquence.

If the minister, like the Bible-class teacher, could become thoroughly familiar with the daily joys and trials of his hearers, could divide them into classes uniform in tastes and habits, and then teach them from consecutive portions of the Bible, he would undoubtedly have many advantages over these women. His field of operation would of necessity be restricted, and he would suffer some disadvantages, for the members of these Bible-classes say, "there is a touch of mother about woman's teaching that softens the heart." They also say that they are able to bear meekly such plain truths from woman as would excite opposition or anger if uttered by man. These experiments made in different places, under varying circumstances, reveal the fact that the closest and most faithful practical instruction, instead of being distasteful, is positively attractive when the truth is evidently spoken in love.

In conducting such a class, the teacher proposes general questions, occasionally addressing them to individuals who she knows are prepared or willing to answer. She also encourages the asking of questions, which she believes to be put in good faith, and which are calculated to draw out information on the subject under consideration,—though she represses anything like argument. This class-instruction is only a part of the teacher's work. She becomes intimately acquainted with the peculiar characteristics of each individual by private conversation, and visits to the home and workshop, that she may appropriately urge upon

him the claims of religion,—such appeals being always, if possible, followed by prayer. A judicious teacher rallies around her some influential, stable members of the class as co-workers. This must be done in a way that will not excite jealousies in others, or lift these men out of their proper sphere ; the duty assigned to them being performed under her special supervision. Their zeal and efficiency in spiritual work often surprise and humiliate the teacher. After the Bible-class becomes an organized power, temperance and other moral associations are allowed to grow out of it, but its spiritual influence must extend over everything in any way connected with it.

Mothers' Meetings.—The foundation for all this aggressive work was laid by canvassing the homes of children connected with Church-schools, for mothers to attend a meeting for social, industrial, and religious purposes. It was soon found that women who had been long alienated from God's house, and who tried to justify themselves by the want of cordiality at the church, insufficiency of clothing, home cares, etc., were readily induced to come with their neighbors to a social meeting of mothers. When these women were thus brought under religious influences, and had improved as wives and mothers, some of their husbands asked if nothing was to be done for them. The following letter sufficiently explains the practical working of this institution :

"Dear Madam,—I received your letter of the 23d inst., and avail of my first leisure to reply. The subject of mothers' meetings lies very near to my heart, and I am always rejoiced to have the opportunity of giving the results of my experience to any who desire to have them.

"Perhaps I had better begin by telling you what you would see ordinarily at the mothers' meetings in —— Church, ——. If you were to go in there at half after six

on any Thursday evening, you would find yourself in a large, cheerfully-lighted Sunday-school-room, the forms mostly square, two or three sided. Perhaps at that hour you might find there only the lady in charge, with one of her assistants, and two or three 'mothers.' Gradually, however, the women drop in, and as they take their accustomed seats, enter into friendly chat with one and another around them. The sewing is brought out, sometimes their own, sometimes that provided for them at the meeting. They do not all sew, for ofttimes they are too tired. Meanwhile others of the Committee arrive and circulate among the mothers, and from the cheerful hum, you might, if your eyes were closed, fancy yourself at an evening party.

"They are ordinarily in their working dresses, neatness being the only requisite. Hood and shawls are laid aside, because it is more sociable. The Principal of the Committee speaks to every woman in the room and gathers in their weekly contributions for the clothing or the sick club. Inquiries are made about matters of mutual interest, and often the lady is drawn aside that advice may be asked and given, or some sorrow is poured into her ear to which she is ever ready to respond by a word of kindly sympathy. You may go into a small room adjoining and find three or four, or more, learning to read and write. At one end of the room you will see the mothers grouped around a young girl who is the librarian, for the evening, of the parish library.

"Valuable books are thus carried to the home for the husband, perhaps, or for the mother herself. You will notice one lady going from form to form with a little box in her hand gathering in the pennies. For what purpose? Last year for a poor widow, poorer than themselves; this year for their Indian sisters, at the Santee Mission. And so the evening wears on, till by-and-by a bell is rung, and the work folded up and put away. And then all is hushed,

and the hymn is sung, and the portion from the Bible read, simply explained, and practically enforced. Then prayer is offered, the doxology sung, and they go to their respective homes, refreshed for the duties of the coming week.

"And this has been going on, with slight variations, for the last eight and a half years, and still we are not weary.

"'Do you give them the garments they make?' *No*,— emphatically, *no*. The work, apart from that which very few of them bring with them, is done for others. During the war we worked for the soldiers in hospital. Next, we made a box of clothing for the Indian children; sometimes sheets and pillow-cases, etc. etc., for the use of the sick; sometimes we sew for a mother who is sick and overworked and cannot do her own sewing. This winter we are working for the Indians.

"Our principle is, to offer no *pecuniary* inducement for any to attend. Those who come with that in view soon stop coming.

"In this connection I will speak of the Clothing and Sick Clubs, to which reference has been made above. They have both grown out of our mothers' meeting, and were not at all comprehended in our original plan, and should, I think, never be had in the commencement of such an enterprise.

"The Clothing Club is very simple in its plan. The mothers (such as like) pay into it, as they can, ten cents to one dollar per week, and receive an *equivalent* in muslin, calico, and ready-made garments, shoes, and sometimes coal. For all these articles they pay *cost price*.

"The Sick Club is intended to help mothers in their sicknesses *other than confinements*. One dollar is charged for the entrance fee; eight cents per week is the stated payment. Any one who has been a member for a year, and whose dues are all paid, receives in sickness, three dollars a week, and thirty dollars are paid towards her

funeral in case of death. No woman can join either of these clubs till she has been a member of mothers' meeting three months.

"'How often do you visit them?' Our rules require that each woman shall be visited at least once a month. In case of sickness, sorrow, etc., more frequently. There is no limit assigned to the frequency of visits when the visitor has the time. A weekly visit is a great boon to some of our mothers. I need hardly add that these visits should be purely visits of friendship and sympathy. My own experience has taught me that till such a bond is established, the less of advice given the better,—*unless it is sought.*

"'Do you use a form of prayer? and whose?'

"The only form of prayer that we use is that which our Church puts into the hands of all her children. We commence with the Confession, the Lord's Prayer, and then a selection of Collects only, or Collects with a brief extempore prayer,—just as our needs may be. I occasionally read some interesting paper bearing on the subject that I wish to bring before them; sometimes a narrative.

"Once a month we have a missionary evening, when I read to them facts which I cull from the SPIRIT OF MISSIONS, private letters, or other sources.

"The end and aim of all our efforts is to bring our mothers to the Saviour, and into connection with his Church.

"Yours, truly and respectfully,

"R."

Secular instruction has, in these operations, been confined mainly to night-schools, which are held in some parishes through nine or ten months. When the session is protracted, it is found best to open the school two nights in the week for girls, and two for boys, as the evening is their only period of leisure. There are some successful

parish schools, but not of so high a grade, nor on so extended a scale as Rome will force us to adopt ere long. When the Church dignifies and spiritualizes the office of a parish school-teacher, and affords her daughters the special training needed for the work, surely devoted women will offer themselves as freely as they now do for service in public schools. Experiments already made with the aid of trained, devoted women have been so successful, that the Church can ill afford to delay much longer the adoption of an extended system of secular instruction.

Third. *Intelligence and Reverence in Public Worship.* The liturgical service of the Protestant Episcopal Church seems so plain and simple to educated persons who have been long accustomed to use it, that they find it difficult to make proper allowance for the uneducated and the stranger, who, untaught, are much embarrassed in its use. This difficulty is often urged as an objection to the Prayer-Book. That ground is at present well taken, and it will continue to be fatal to the catholicity of the Church, unless there is ample provision for training all sorts and conditions of men in the intelligent use of our Liturgy. Irreverence in God's house is easily acquired; and superstitious reverence without intelligence seems to be equally easy when it is authoritatively substituted for religion; but intelligent, reverential public worship is so difficult that it requires special study and training. This difficulty enhances the importance of instruction in the Prayer-Book, and of training in its use, not only in Bible-classes and mothers' meetings, but, also, from house to house: for next to the study of God's Word come intelligence and reverence in divine worship. It has been demonstrated that, even with the sons of toil, our liturgical service affords unequaled advantages in promoting intelligent and reverent public worship; but, to accomplish this, the efforts of the minister must be seconded by the educated members of his congre-

gation. With their aid in visiting, and in the preparatory departments just referred to, intelligent and reverent worship can be restored to the Church. In connection with the Bible-classes and mothers' meetings that are now in active operation, there is instruction in the use of the Prayer-Book at special meetings convened for that purpose, and persons thus trained help the stranger by finding places, and encourage him by responding aloud at his side. The considerate minister allows time for those who are not familiar with the Prayer-Book, to find the Psalter for the day; and he reads deliberately, making such pauses as experience shows to be necessary where the congregation is not wholly composed of educated adults.

Children, in some of the parish, industrial, and Sunday-schools, are taught to repeat the general Confession, the Lord's Prayer, and the Creed aloud and in unison, and to read the Psalter in the same manner. In some cases, to quicken interest in the school, a dozen boys and girls were specially trained to read the Psalter for the day, and although far below the average in age and education, read more distinctly and effectively than a school of over three hundred pupils and thirty teachers, who took the alternate verses. At other times, the girls with their teachers, and the boys with theirs, read alternately. The Prayer-Book is the only book of devotion used in these schools, that children may become familiar with, and take pleasure in, the public worship of the Church. As far as is possible, the chants and tunes used in the Church are taught in the schools; this, with their training in reading the Psalter, makes God's house attractive to them. The infant department of the Sunday-school too often promotes habits of irreverence,—and makes devotional music distasteful by the constant use of inappropriate and exciting tunes. In the parishes under consideration, there is an effort to correct these abuses, and the schools are full and popular; their

members growing up into manhood and womanhood in the Church, because they are trained in intelligent worship, instead of being stimulated with excitants that quicken the natural relish for the world, for ritualism, or for the religious bodies that seem to thrive upon such aliment.

Fourth. *Free services, Christian fellowship, and parochial supervision* must be linked together by an inseparable bond, or the Protestant Episcopal Church cannot fulfill her great mission. The introduction of free services, or rather of free churches, had to contend against a firmly-fixed habit, rich proprietors, a self-indulgent spirit, and strong prejudices that were increased by the indiscreet or unsound men who often took a leading part in the movement. The following testimony of the House of Bishops gives the highest human sanction to it: "In consecrated houses there can be no private ownership that is not entirely subordinate to the ownership of God himself, and the uses of all his children; and, while we rejoice in the multiplication of churches, professedly free, provided they are properly maintained, we suggest that hundreds of our churches, apart from the ordinary services of the Lord's Day, might be freely opened to all comers, for the ministrations of the blessed gospel."

Christian fellowship had well-nigh ceased in our Church, through the unfavorable effect of the pew-system, of social distinctions, and of other worldly influences. Pastoral supervision seemed also to be decreasing in extent and influence from very many causes. After failures and partial success, free services and free churches have at length taken root; and with the aid of Christian fellowship and pastoral supervision, the system seems to be capable of indefinite expansion and universal application, with the promise of perpetuity, because it is based on the gospel principle.

Free services, when grafted on the pew-system, may be successful in the Church of Rome, until her people become

enlightened and independent of priestcraft. Even there, the people are socialized and compacted by innumerable sodalities or associations that abound in good fellowship; and we all know the closeness of pastoral supervision through the confessional, and other equally objectionable instrumentalities. With us these occasional free services have, in no case that has come under the observation of the writer, accomplished any permanent good by drawing in and compacting any large number of self-supporting working people, without the agency of mothers' meetings and Bible-classes as a preparatory movement. Even with these appliances, more Christian fellowship and pastoral supervision are needful with occasional free services than with free churches, for there is always odium in having, or seeming to have, one service for the rich and another for the poor. Experience has revealed another serious objection to half-way measures, except as a preparatory movement; for working people give much more freely towards the support of a church where they have some responsibilities, than where they are merely received on sufferance.

One of these parishes labored under this difficulty for seven years, but at the end of that time all the services and every seat became entirely free, causing a great improvement in all respects. The other churches and chapels that are under consideration are free, except in one instance, where one out of three services is not free. These experiments, running through nine years, have high value; as none of the zealous workers were advocates for free churches until, after a large experience, they became convinced that the great neglected classes cannot in any other way be brought to the gospel feast. The power of Christian fellowship has been fully tested and forcibly illustrated, yet these workers aver that in no case has any disrespect been shown to them, neither is there ever any disposition manifested to interfere with social distinctions.

Pastoral supervision by the minister or by his visitors and other trained helpers is just as necessary to keep this people in a living connection with the Church, as Christian fellowship is to attract them to it. In one of our largest and most aggressive city parishes, hundreds of working people were in a series of years brought into a living connection with the Church,—they were confirmed, and became regular communicants. At the end of twenty years the rector testified that he did not know the spiritual condition or even the location of one-tenth of them. This examination enabled him to see the absolute necessity of class instruction, of good fellowship in God's house, and also of the adoption of some systematic plan by which pastoral care might be incessantly exercised over each person. The following are among the causes that make a close pastoral supervision absolutely necessary in connection with aggressive work:

Working people are, of necessity, more or less migratory; sometimes the removal that is designed to be temporary becomes permanent. At other times it is so sudden that ministers cannot be notified, but the watchful visitor usually hears of it directly or indirectly, procures for him a letter of transfer, and specially commends the person to other Christian workers. Without such introduction, the feeling of strangeness in God's house is so strong, and the absence of Christian fellowship so chilling, that another Church connection is rarely formed, until affliction comes, or they are sought out by some visitor.

Working people are often absent from church, owing to sickness, the care of children, household duties, shabby clothing, misunderstandings, misrepresentations, infirmities of temper, etc. They thus acquire a habit of staying at home that needs to be corrected; for if they are not missed, they naturally think that their presence is not desired. Surely they are not altogether censurable for having the

idea that in a Father's house the presence of each member should be desired, and that even the absent prodigal should be sought for and welcomed. With cordial Christian fellowship and close pastoral supervision, this once estranged people have become steadfast, exemplary communicants, whose self-sacrificing zeal, humility, and simple faith often humble their more favored visitor. In each of these parishes the work has been performed in the strictest subordination to the minister; and there has always been perfect harmony, as is certified to by the following extracts from a publication by the rector of one of them:

"Here I wish to have it noticed that the services thus performed by Christian women have not been simply in the *instruction* of these young or older men, or even more, not merely in the bringing them from their common haunts into the church and Bible-class, valuable as these services are. No! they have amounted to real *pastoral* work, to the kind of labor which is the peculiar province of the minister of the gospel, and in which he does not generally look for lay help, and therefore they have proven, by my experience, to be real assistants to the ministry.

"It is in this that the peculiar value of our experience consists. *Every* minister has looked for help from women in training those who are to be taught, but it is a new thing to have a minister's special working power in his pastoral office, increased by so many pairs of eyes and so many earnest, prayerful hearts as he can bring women to labor for him.

"Were I not desirous to be brief, I could give surprising cases in proof of what I have mentioned thus generally, and satisfy any one that Christian women may become the most efficient aids of the pastor, even in the work which most particularly belongs to *him* as pastor. I need not say here that the ladies, who have thus been instrumental in bringing sinners to Jesus, remain the friends of such con-

verts, and again help the work of the ministry in watching over these souls and keeping them in the right way.

"I trust the time will come when, in our Episcopal Church, as well as in some other organizations, it will be seen to be unnecessary that a separate minister be supported for every two or three hundred people, but the work of the gospel may be carried on in large bodies under one head, with all the power and efficiency which belong to such concentration of strength. W. W."

THE END.

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